MARCH 1954

COMMENTARY

The New Suburbanites of the 50's — HARRY GERSH
That Big Deal With the Russians — PETER MEYER
The Hot War Over Our Schools — SPENCER BROWN
Will the Iraqis Fight for the West? — RAY ALAN
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The Study of Man
New Light on "The Authoritarian Personality" — NATHAN GLAZER

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Judd L. Teller — H. Stuart Hughes — Milton Hindus
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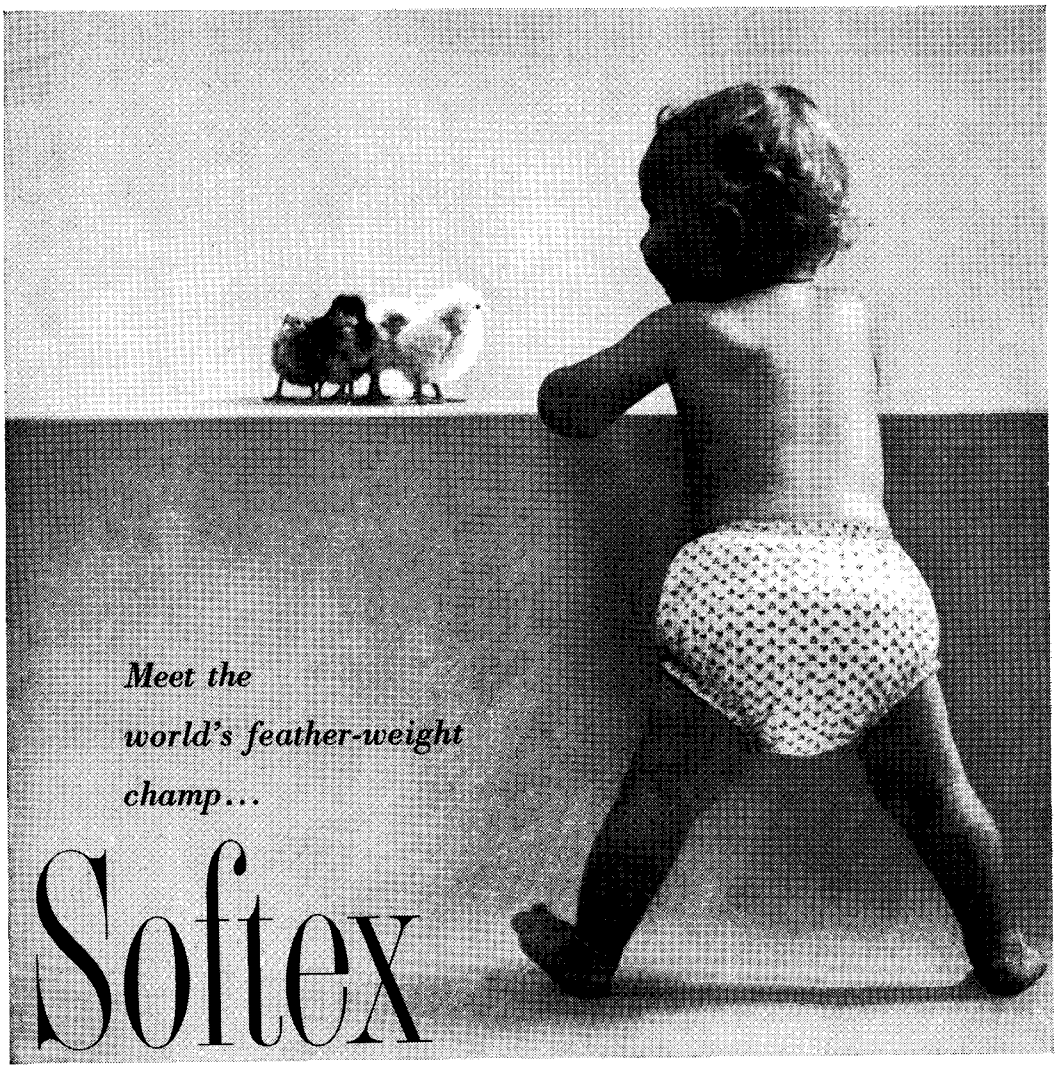

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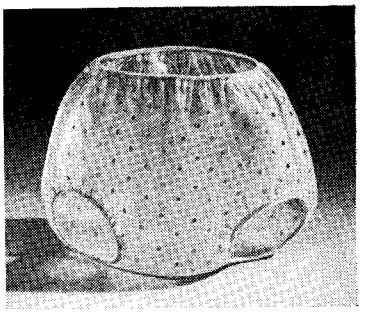

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

What Happened at Yalta *G. F. Hudson*

Could things have been handled otherwise at Yalta—and at Teheran or Potsdam? Was it plain ignorance of the nature of Soviet Communism that led the West to make the mistakes it did? Or were secret friends and agents of the Kremlin at work within the American delegation? If so, what part did they play in influencing decisions? These are the explosive questions that a British historian tries to answer.

Israel's Foreign-Policy Jitters *Hal Lehrman*

A seasoned observer of Israel's politics, just returned from a lengthy stay there, discusses the causes of that tense and suspicious nervousness which has increasingly characterized Israel's relations with the United States and the United Nations during recent months, and tries, in the light of realities, to measure to what extent it seems justified.

"Sholom Aleichem" at the Barbizon *Midge Decter*

New Yorkers and their children have in recent months been enthusiastically "rediscovering" the ghetto of Eastern Europe through a theatrical presentation called *The World of Sholom Aleichem,* one of the hits of the current season. Would Sholom Aleichem or his contemporaries have recognized their "world" in this curiously distorted re-creation?

Squaring American Politics with Realities *Norman Thomas*

One of America's favorite elder statesmen contributes an unusually fresh and vigorous reexamination of the gap between the articulated platforms of the Republican, Democratic, *and* Socialist parties, and American realities—and calls for a realignment of American politics, with a view to giving us, not a third party, but a genuine opposition.

The Emigré Doctor Finds His Place *James Rorty*

The years of Hitler brought to our shores a host of European doctors who, after some initial difficulties, found places for themselves almost without exception—and, in time, success—on the American landscape. Mr. Rorty tells of the work these men have done, and of the problems of personal and social "adjustment" which still pursue them.

Archaeology and the Truth of the Bible *Immanuel Lewy*

Not long ago, the Higher Criticism seemed to have discredited entirely the historical authenticity of the Bible. Recent archaeological discoveries, however, by confirming certain elements of the Biblical story, seem to offer ground for accepting the "substantial historicity" of the whole. Is such a conclusion justified?

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COMMENTARY

THE NEW SUBURBANITES OF THE 50'S

Jewish Division

HARRY GERSH

LOOKING back, we can see that our generation was a generation on the move. Perhaps even more than our parents. They made the big jump over the water, and then they rooted themselves into the Jewish neighborhoods in New York and the other big cities. But we, the second generation, the young marrieds (not so young any more), who grew up in the depression of the 30's, have made three moves from our parents' homes in the old neighborhoods. And each move was, in some ways, as disturbing as our parents' move out of the *shtetl*. First we moved to Greenwich Village; next to the more respectable middle-class sections of Bronx, Brooklyn, or Queens; and now, to Suburbia. It was the same in Philadelphia, in Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles, Cleveland. Each town had its old Jewish neighborhoods, its bohemia, its middle-class areas and its new suburbs.

When enough people move, the scientists call it a movement. Naturally. And sociological studies have to be written about movements, and "think" pieces in serious magazines. And with every movement there is great discussion and taking of sides and shaking of heads. When it is a Jewish movement (meaning the Jewish sector of a general movement) the shaking of heads predominates. *What are we coming to?* But first, before we try to answer that question, we might retrace the winding route by which we came.

Most of our parents came over before the First World War, in the high tide of East European emigration. Jews with personal memories of the 1905 revolution; of the intricacies of the dialectical differences (sharp-

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1954 being the Tercentenary of the Jews' arrival in America, the historians and portraitists, formal and informal, are readying their paint brushes on behalf of the anniversary occasion, scheduled to begin next September. But will the subject sit properly still, in his Colonial wig from the costumers, for the official portrait? It looks uncertain, what with the American Jews (large sections of them, anyway) still very much on the move (this time to the suburbs), and acquiring decidedly new ways and costumes. HARRY GERSH here gives us a kind of preliminary sketch of one sector of this current development, reported at first hand. Once ready to settle for a sixty-five-dollar-a-week civil service job and a small apartment in the big city, he finds himself the possessor of a home in the suburbs complete with lawn, garage, and trees—in short, a rather solid citizen. Mr. Gersh is director of community relations for the Jewish Family Service of New York. Before that he was assistant in the Education Department of the Textile Workers Union of America, CIO. He was born in New York City in 1912 and attended the Drexel Institute of Technology, Brookwood College, New York University, and the University of Paris. He has written for radio and TV; among his numerous contributions to COMMENTARY are "The Jewish Paintner" (January 1948) and "The Code According to Mama-Tante-Mom" (March 1952).

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ened by *cheder* training) between the many sects, parties, movements; of the pogroms of 1903-1908. Their first homes were in the ghetto of the Lower East Side or other metropolitan equivalents. But by the time the children were aware of surroundings, our parents had made the first step up the urban ladder, aided by the high employment and comparatively easy money of 1914-1918. So my family lived in Strawberry Mansion in Philadelphia. Joe's parents were Brownsville, my wife's were East Bronx. We thought of them as Jewish neighborhoods, still ghettos, but not slums. Not in 1920, anyway. We had already started our move outward, seeking a more "American" existence. We saw it then in terms of another bedroom, a private toilet. (We were ahead of the times even then.)

Most of us were still living there when the bubble burst. We graduated into the Works Progress Administration.

We did a lot of "settling for" back in those depression days when a professional rating ($23.51 as I remember) was enough to get married on. Our Saturday evening get-togethers followed a conversational pattern: politics, books, music, job—and then our imagined futures. Joe, who took every examination offered by any civil service commission, agreed to retire from ambition if he was granted a permanent post office job —inside, of course. Phil, the artist, wanted a Capehart with a hundred albums. Paul wanted a year in Paris—then he would accept the deluge. The girls' desires were uniform and, for the times, beyond avarice: permanent appointments as teachers in a good high school. My ambition was specific, limited, and unimaginative. I offered to settle for $65 a week for the rest of my life.

To our own and our mothers' surprise, each of us achieved his dream, or had it offered to him. Our parents had started with the traditional Jewish dreams of glory: the doctor of medicine, the counselor-at-law with a good corporation practice, the professor. But mothers are, of necessity, pragmatists, and ours were super-realists. By the time we were in college our mothers had trimmed their dreams in line with the times and a painfully honest appraisal of our abilities. My mother's constant plea, after the initial dreams were dismissed, was: "Study for civil service." But even when we had achieved their marked-down dreams, our mothers were a little astonished. Good fortune always was a surprise.

Paradoxically, looking backward, those days of depression, of bread-hunger and job-hunger, of Hitler and Franco, of Popular Fronts and Father Coughlin, were simpler than the books say, indeed simpler than the later periods. The answers were evident and concrete. We knew where we were and where we wanted to go. It was not merely youth that gave us the *chutzpah* to offer advice on how to run the world. The world itself seemed about to enter a new renascence. Today, I wouldn't presume to offer advice even to the Mayor of New York—partly, to be sure, because I am no longer a citizen of that city. And therein lies part of the change, an important part.

Our dreams, back then, did not go so far as becoming citizens of Suburbia. Class lines, more a matter of feeling than ideology, were sharply drawn and Suburbia was on the other side of the tracks. But dreams achieved—even cut-price dreams—carry the seeds of corruption. So, in time, we breached the barricades. We turned our backs on the city. An escape? A sellout to the status quo and the material life? A new beachhead for the next push? Or a reconciliation with the realities of life?

Anyway, we moved to the suburbs. Or, as we referred to it more easily, to that house in the suburbs. For it was the house we thought we were after. The suburb, and being a citizen of Suburbia, was more than we bargained for, at least consciously.

II

As I remember the 20's, the years of our growing up, neither we nor our parents were deeply troubled about our environment. Some of the kids must have become gangsters, and some of the girls did wear low-cut dresses, but not near as many as the growing twenty-five-cent literature would have us believe. Whether from preoccupation with making a living, or lack of understanding, our parents didn't even bother to warn us of these pitfalls. It might also have been a new feeling of security. They either respected our innate judgment or had faith in their disciplinary measures. They worried a great deal about our physical health, our standing in school, our future careers, but not

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about sex or guns. Nor did the problem of being a Jew in a non-Jewish world trouble them or us too much.

It was not that the world was more friendly to Jews at the turn of the century. If anything, it was far less friendly. And it was not that our parents lacked consciousness of themselves as Jews, or of the fact that they lived in a non-Jewish world. Even in our ghettos we lived in a non-Jewish world.

True, our immediate social milieu was the family and the *landsman*. When we visited, we visited uncles and aunts and cousins and grandparents. When it was our turn to serve the tea and cake, we served them to families who had lived next door in the old country. The New World friendships were made in the Workmen's Circle, the union local (Yiddish-speaking), the *landsmanshaft*. As these friendships grew, we were sure to find other ties of blood, or *yeshiva*, or *gubernieh*.

Although limited within this frame, our parents' social lives were very active. At least as active as ours today. There was as much visiting back and forth and a lot more going to meetings. And their meetings were so much more social. Our coffee and cookies after PTA meetings are pale beside their after-meeting tea.

But the ships that brought our parents to the golden land brought Italians and Poles and Slavs and Greeks. They moved in with us, across the street or around the block, shouldering aside the older colonies of Irish and Negroes and Germans. I know they moved in with us because their kids were part of the gang, or of the border gangs we fought. Friendships developed either way.

We were very well aware of who was a Jew and who an Irisher or Italian, but it was more like the awareness that named one boy "Red" and another "Skinny." Sometimes we fought over these differences. The fight was perhaps more intense and bloodier if the insult that started it was racial or religious, but the difference was one of degree. We lived in a jungle world, as the books insist, but more because any children's world is a jungle than because our world was set down in the middle of a slum or soon-to-be-slum.

Mom's relations with her non-Jewish neighbors were tempered by her heritage of fear and distrust. But the neighbors never knew it. There were nods and hellos. On holidays we delivered "tastes" (you could make a meal of those tastes) of the holiday *meichalim—hamentashen, matzos,* potato *latkes, fluden*. There were no occasions for social intercourse beyond these demonstrations of friendliness and neighborliness. Neither we nor the neighbors wanted it otherwise. The neighbors' social lives followed the same patterns of family and old-country province.

We were aware of Mom's fear and distrust. We knew her stories of pogroms. We were specially fascinated by the story of Pop's brother who lay all day in the mud while the hooves of Cossack horses cut at him. We understood these stories as episodes from another world, just as my stories that begin "when Daddy was a young boy" are unreal to my son. But we knew these things had happened because we were Jews, and that they had not happened to the families of non-Jewish kids. We knew and used the Yiddish phrases that damn the outsider. They were similar to the Italian, Greek, Irish, Polish phrases that damned their outsiders. But the storied *goy* was never identified with anyone we knew.

When we slammed into the house after school to drop our books and grab an apple, there was always a second apple—and the same words of caution against getting run over—for that week's buddy-buddy. At supper Mom displayed the same never satisfied interest in the momentary visitor whether his name was Moish, Luig, Mick, or Staish.

Actually, there was an "enemy-*goy*," the outsider we feared and distrusted. But he had to be more than a non-Jewish individual. He had to be the landlord, the people who owned the "interests" and the trusts, the rich men who controlled the police and, sometimes, Pop's job. These were the *goyim* that were our enemies. But they were Luig's and Mick's enemies, too. Later we identified them as the class enemy.

BUT the places we lived in *were* ghettos, no matter how well concealed. We Jews were the majority group. Travel to the outside world was limited. So was our awareness of that world—and of being a small minority in a larger totality. We knew about the bigger world, but as we knew that there were 400 million Chinese at the bottom of the world walking around with their heads hang-

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ing down. (Today we seem to spend so much time saying "I am a Jew" or "I am a Negro." We say it defensively or aggressively and look about suspiciously for someone's confirmation. When we get it, we don't know whether to be glad or mad. It may have been the times, or our parents' greater sanity, but we didn't make such a *tsimmes* about it then.)

In those days we were the majority in our community and we reacted as a majority. We were not hyper-conscious of our Jewishness. It was not that we were indifferent to it, or that we tried to escape from it. Yiddish was the *lingua franca* of the home and the business community. Things Jewish were ingrained in our lives and not resented. A major third of the kids went to Hebrew school, at least until Bar Mitzvah. (No one ever heard of "Bas Mitzvah.") A second group was steeped in Sholom Aleichem and Peretz at the Yiddish-speaking Workmen's Circle or *Folk-shulen*. Another group escaped after-school education except for a six-months' cram course at twelve and one-half. Regardless of which group you belonged to, the relation to Jewishness was pretty much the same. It was taken for granted, accepted; it was unquestioned, it was not tortured and examined this way and that way.

Our parents had serious differences of opinion among themselves. The Orthodox held rigidly to the old ways. The rebels deliberately kept their shades up while they ate on Yom Kippur. The only difference it made to the kids was in the extra schools we attended. They all took too much time away from shinny and touch and gang fights. And we all broke down on the third day of Pesach and stole out of the neighborhood to buy *treife* candy and ice cream. (I think our parents knew it all the time.)

Occasionally there were reverberations from the outside. An older brother was refused entrance to medical school or college. A sister missed out on a good job. Many of us studied engineering, although we knew that that profession offered nothing to a Jew. We were neither Pollyannaish about these barbs nor did we dig out the machine guns. We accepted these evidences within a context we have since lost. Perhaps it is only in retrospect that that context seems better. In either case, its loss was bound to happen.

III

If one word can characterize our relations with ourselves, and the few others in the world, during the days of our bohemia, it would be "aggressive." We were aggressive about our Jewishness and a bit more aggressive about our Jewishness being completely unimportant. The same held true for our priest-damning Catholics and our sneering ex-Protestants. By this time we knew exactly who our enemy was, and he was the common enemy of all the ex-religionists.

We split up among the sects of the new prophets—Marx, Stalin, Lenin, Trotsky, Lovestone, Thomas—and the far more numerous sub-prophets. And we proved again and again, to our own satisfaction, that there was but one true church—ours. The Stalinists, who fished in all waters, played the Jewish angle for all it was worth among the older Jews. (Just as they dangled the lure of anti-Semitism among those who were particularly susceptible to emphasis on the *Jewish* landlord, the *Jewish* boss, the installment *Shylock*.) But most of us were cold-blooded in our refusal to be divided by a single comma or capital from that amorphous something called the Masses. We went out of our way to cultivate friendships with Negroes, insisting there wasn't any color. We expected Gentiles to go out of their way to deny our Jewishness and their Christianity.

New York's Greenwich Village, centered around 8th Street, and Philadelphia's, spread from the poor man's bohemia around 8th and Locust to the rich around Panama Street and Rittenhouse Square, and Chicago's, moving restlessly between the Gold Coast and 57th Street, became our new home spiritually—and physically for the fortunate. The too poor, and the too family-bound, slept in their parents' homes (most nights) and lived their real lives with us.

In this insulated existence we spoke knowingly of the Masses. We made large plans for them and blueprinted vital decisions. We even sent out missionaries to the trade unions and unemployed organizations. But most of them came back disillusioned, or found a middle way in government service. We abjured class distinctions, but we were, in effect, the upper class of the Masses, a kind of intellectual elite, junior grade.

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We argued then as if the world and the things in it were either totally good or totally evil. You were either for us or against us. But we were not as flat and single-minded as this sounds. We were moved by sound and decent passions, although the evidence was hidden behind the implacable phrases we threw at the world. Our friendships were deep and loyal. Many of us studied honestly to find the true meanings of what we proclaimed so dogmatically. And our dedication (again with the exception of the hard-core Stalinists) was not so absolute that we lost all perspective and humor. Not only were we young, but the world seemed to be entering a new youth with us.

A good part of the whole group was Jewish, but in this climate we refused to acknowledge any attribute that might act as a divisive factor in the Mass world. We would sneer at contributing to Federation (even if we had the money). We were resolute in refusing to join organizations that had a specifically Jewish character. (I, and a few others, kept our childhood connections with the Workmen's Circle, but the name of the organization seemed excuse enough.) But the renunciation was vocal and often a debater's trick. It somehow was like marching in the May Day parade. We did it because it was the daring, the ultra-progressive thing to do. But we were poor marchers and uncomfortable in the ranks. We knew, deep inside, that we just weren't the bare-legged, brawny-armed, in-perfect-unison, marching types. (Even later, in the army, we had trouble with the cadence marching.) So we made up for our defection in indirect, often hidden, ways. After the May Day parade, sitting around with our beer, we slid from "Banker and Boss" and "Left, Left, Left" to *"Der Shuvah"* and ended up with *"Rozhinkes mit Mandlen."* What could be less progressive? No wonder the Stalinists were suspicious of us.

IV

In the postwar world we settled down. Most of us got what we had offered to "settle for" in the 30's. We were the young married couples with the postwar babies who caused the housing shortage. We fled the Jewish neighborhoods of our growing up, we fled bohemia. We came to the middle-class warrens of the outlying boroughs. We became respectable married folk. And we were prey, for the first time, to all the doubts and worries of the responsible family men.

For those who went, the war was a kind of purgatory, but not much more so than for those who stayed. In it we burned off our sins, our fleshpots, our revolt. And we came out to inspect the promised *Gan Eden*. The theology may be all mixed up, but many of us found a Limbo instead.

As a matter of fact, the new neighborhoods were in direct line of succession to our parents' progress. If there had never been a depression and a Village period we would have moved from the East Side, then to the East Bronx (or Strawberry Mansion), then to the West Bronx. And that's where the two of us wound up. With others it was Queens or Washington Heights or Central Park West and their Philadelphia or Chicago counterparts. But it was all the same. Amorphous areas without character or feeling. Still ghettos, even though there was a difference—but not always for the better.

Some of the group remained bohemian even when they had to seek apartments among the scorned middle class. But they were comparatively few, and they found it hard to establish contact with the new Villagers, the younger bohemians. So they became strident, or Stalinists. (This second crop, incidentally, was quite different from the 30's vintage—worse—but that's another story.)

One old friend from this group came to visit about a year after the return from the war. "Well," he said, "how does it feel to live among the all-rightniks?" I blanched, because I knew that it was only our old friendship that had changed the question from "How does it feel to *be* an all-rightnik?"

Me, an all-rightnik, a solid burgher? A man who rushed for the subway in the morning; spent his day in hard, competitive, unimaginative work downtown; was sardined back home in the evening; holed up with the radio and sports page; took his wife to the movies once a week; woke up, one day, too old, without knowing what he had done or where he had been? No, I wasn't that man. Whatever the external evidences to the contrary, I still thought of myself as my own man, inside where one thought of oneself. I still maintained a small, unrelenting search for salvation.

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Conformity? How we dreaded it, watched for the first symptoms of corruption in our friends and ourselves. Remember, nonconformity was the hall-mark of our group. Our parents were nonconformists. They were nonconformists in politics back in the old country and socialists in this. They had broken from the very strict conformity of their parents' Orthodoxy. We started with that background and made it a positive part of ourselves, almost a reflex, during our maturing. Now we were face to face with the very pattern of conformity. The responsibilities of family were one pressure. Desire for comfort and ease, especially after the years in the navy, was another. Age did its part. And waking up to find that our pet solutions weren't sound solutions—and some of the older answers, somewhat revised, were closer to truth.

When we were preparing to take over the world, we were four books to the left of our parents. At that time we blamed their Rooseveltism on lack of understanding, on age, on back-sliding. As a matter of fact they were following a logical pattern. We were the mavericks. Mom, for instance, although she had spent time in the Czar's jails as a revolutionary and dangerous character, was a conservative woman with a great desire to be a part of the American world and its ways, yes, to conform. So what was wrong with that, if they were good ways? In matters of sex and morals and dress and furnishings, she was rather "narrow."

Now, in our postwar West Bronx, I was trying to find a pattern for my own way. And the realization came that we had been always trying to build all-encompassing religions. With some it was vegetarianism, with others Marxism, with us it was non-conformity. And it didn't have to be that way. We could be non-conformist in politics or religion or dress, but did we have to furnish our home in those plumber-built chairs to prove our freedom? Were we giving in to comfort or, maybe, revolting against revolt? Interpret it as you wish, we took a new turn in the road, and essentially—as it turned out—we were closer to Mom's and Pop's way than our bohemian pattern.

For the first time, I found myself nagged for specific answers to an old question: "What am I if I am a Jew?"

The question didn't come up in that form. If it had it could easily have been avoided. But I did struggle with, "Do I join the American Legion or the Jewish War Veterans or the American Veterans Committee?"

My first continuing experience with formal religious services was in the army and navy. The first Pesach and Yom Kippur out of uniform brought questions that didn't seem to have any answers except "surrender."

And when Johnny was born the struggle within became intense.

We would have helped ourselves to work out an answer back in the Village days. We lived together, close-knit, and spent hours in thinking through our problems. But, perhaps, these problems weren't for joint attack. In any case, the brilliant mind lived in Queens, the logical one in Brooklyn, the feeling one in Jersey. And we had trouble with baby-sitters.

Of course, we didn't need the full social lives we formerly knew. After the many years of separation it was good to live by ourselves for a while. Children restricted movement still more. But we did need some society. We were conscious of a real gap. We needed other people of like hates and enthusiasms to talk to, to laugh with, to go to the movies with. Our parents had an answer for this problem: "the family," in the sense of *mishpocheh,* clan. But the family was as dispersed as the gang. Even those that lived within walking distance shared little with us beyond a common ancestor. Our parents, who thought that siblings and cousins and uncles and aunts are born loving each other, were shocked when we voiced doubts about community of interests with the family.

The other possibility was the apartment house. But it took at least a year to get to know the people on either side and another year to work up a relation with the folks upstairs. And we were snobs. Without objective evidence (except Sunday's lounge clothes) we assumed that we were the only free souls and the other tenants were the all-rightniks. Seeing someone in the elevator with a book other than the current book club choice was a shock, although it happened fairly often. We still were sufficiently defensive of our new bourgeois ac-

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coutrements and surroundings to look for and imagine dividers between ourselves and the rest of the community.

Events leading to the third move reached a climax the day we recognized a certain identity between Johnny and the yelling brats milling around the schoolhouse. The idea came hard—but it came—that John would walk alone, be six one day, and disappear into that mob. We saw the school with new eyes. The political clichés disappeared into the reality of a particular school for a particular child. If that chattering pile of brick and glass was to house my son, then what kind of pile was it? And if those teachers were to teach John, then who were they and what would they teach him?

V

We wound up in a village in a township in mid-Westchester county. Other friends saw the same visions and wound up in upper reaches of Westchester, in Nassau, Suffolk, nameless places in New Jersey.

We didn't move because of the school. The school was a trigger that released all the dammed up social push-and-pulls of income change, social dissatisfaction, need for identification, crowded subways, and lack of closet space.

The West Bronx had been a way stop, not a home. We made no ties there, sank no roots, left no friends. The community didn't have enough identity to differentiate it from a thousand others. No one seemed to belong to it. And, more important, no one seemed to worry that there was no belonging.

When we visit my folks in Philadelphia we occasionally drive past the old neighborhood and nostalgia wells up and I point out to my wife and my son the corner I lounged on, the ice cream parlor I took my first girl to, the park I played ball in. When we drive down the East Bronx, my wife shows us her old house and *shul* and school. When we pass the apartment house in the West Bronx it's as if we never knew it.

The changes wrought by the war touched us deeply, but many wore off in a short time or retreated from consciousness. In contrast, the changes brought about by the move to Suburbia, while they came slowly, seemed to affect us basically. Some of the changes appear slight, mere surface conformations, but are not without significance. For example: the incidence of fancy sport shirts and suede shoes falls off sharply. And the incidence of convertibles also falls off from the city to the suburbs. It must mean something.

Of the basic changes, the first has to do with the earth and growing things. Most of us accept and repeat the cliché that holds the Jew estranged from the land. Our vision of ourselves is of an urban creature isolated by time and trade from the mysteries of seed and soil. The mystery was not dispelled by the move to Suburbia. However, it became a known and common mystery, shared by Jew and non-Jew, wrestled with from March through October, worried about the rest of the year.

After the moving man dumps you into your house—with no janitor or superintendent to call upon in emergencies—it takes two days to break a path through the furniture and coiled rugs to get the coffee going. On the third day the new master steps outside to survey his broad acre(s). It was on the third day of the creation of the world that God caused grass to grow and herbs to bring forth seed.

It is pleasant to walk on your own earth and feel your own green grass and plan your own mysteries of birth and bloom and death. Only in our wildest dreams, the ones we didn't tell each other, did we include the ownership of broad acres, half-acres, quarter-acres. It is pleasant—but also worrisome. The clichés take on meaning. The cultural tags become things rather than words. When I spoke grandly of *my* house, *my* fourteen trees, *my* three varieties of lilac, *my* prize roses, my friends were envious. But they also were apprehensive. "Can you take care of things like that?" Even my wife, with all the required high school and college courses in botany, looked at the fertile earth and wondered would these growing things flourish under a new name on the deed of ownership?

The decision, slowly arrived at, that success and failure with the land is not affected by ethnic background, has deep importance. Yes, we knew it before. Great scholarly studies proved it conclusively. Our basic political and ethical premises were built on the fact. But these are not the same as planting the seed with your own fingers, in soil prepared with your own salt sweat, and seeing the

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green-white tendrils push up to become flower or fruit. This is proof that penetrates deeply.

OF COURSE, there are *kalyikehs* in every field. They come to complain every weekend. Success due to hours of work, fertilizer, rain, weedkiller, worry, and prayer is ascribed to *goyishe hent*. It's the new version of Mom's *goyishe kop*.

There is some trauma involved in this ascription. To mitigate it I will explain one of my secrets to which I owe my reputation as a husbandman. The grass *is* greener on the other side. This is particularly true on my side. My lawn comes down from the fieldstone fence in a gentle slope, then down a steep bank, on to a level stretch, finally down to the street in a sharp slope of pachysandra. Passers-by can see the lawn only at an oblique angle. From that angle almost everyone's lawn looks like a green carpet. The brown spots, the crab grass, the plantain, show only when you walk over the lawn and look directly down. This looking for trouble is done only on your own land. The neighbor's lawn always looks greener than yours.

My observations indicate that there is no difference between Jew and non-Jew as husbandman. We are victims of our own cliché. We come to the land with a full-blown insecurity that shows itself in constant comparisons and seeking for advice.

The realization that the green thumb is not a *goyishe* monopoly is the significant change for the urban Jew transplanted. As he works his ground, finds interest in the garden section, he learns that seeds do not wither in his hands and soil does not turn sour under his ministrations. The estrangement was a temporary one. The Jew's trees leaf and make shade, his roses bloom into November, his worms loosen the soil better than Monsanto's Krilium. On the way into town on the 8:37, laden with lilacs or "mums," he is no longer a stranger.

There is an exception, of course. All groups are blessed with *nudniks*. But even the most ardent assimilationist will not gainsay the primacy of the Jewish *nudnik*. It is accentuated when the *nudnikery* is horticultural. However, it just so happens that *my* strawberries have a depth of color, a sharpness of taste. . . .

THE second significant change has to do with man as a political animal. The urban creature lives far from the seats of political power. He comes up with a biennial spate of indignation about conditions in City Hall and a quadrennial dose of great partisanship. The rest of the time he calls forth anathema on the politicians in power. Added to this generality, which we shared, was our own attitude toward politics. We still hung on to our earlier attitudes toward the wielders of the police power. Cops were Cossacks. Politicians were venal. Successful politicians had to be crooks. An honest man couldn't win. And if he did, they stole his office from him. Look at what happened to the five New York City assemblymen elected in 1919. We felt as a group—aggrieved, hopeless. We fought in the political arena but we knew we couldn't win.

But in Suburbia the seat of political power is down the road, around the bend. Taxes are a real problem, not a vague something that the landlord pays out of your rent money. In the village and township you pay out cold cash and expect to see it well—and immediately—spent. Generally it is. When a couple of hundred voters make a formidable bloc, uneasy politicians walk warily.

In the city, when the streets are dirty, or when the garbage collection is unsatisfactory, you may threaten to call the Board of Health. (Always the Board of Health, regardless of the problem or real culprit.) But, you make the threat to a neighbor and then forget about it unless you are willing to be considered a crank. Go fight City Hall!

Out here it's different. Every day the garbage man comes around back and empties your cans. Every day a highway man sweeps the streets. The men and their supervisors are aware that they do their jobs under the vigilant eyes of the householders and taxpayers. Complaints are immediately investigated.

The trees on my land are mine, and my private responsibility. But the five maples fronting the street, though mine, are the village's responsibility. Last year I noticed that the bark on one tree was split and the wound oozing. I called the Village Hall. Within twenty-four hours a highway department man came to investigate and diagnose. We differed on the diagnosis so I made a second call. The next day the village man-

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ager himself came to see what was bothering a citizen and a taxpayer. Ah, power. . . .

It takes a while for this sense of concern and power to sink in. For the first year or two in Suburbia, local elections (we may have four a year) confuse the new voters. They cannot figure out what we're voting for this time—or why. Eventually, one issue or election rouses the good citizen. It may be a vote on whether to build a new garbage-disposal plant or to buy a new fire engine. (We don't delegate too much authority to our legislators.) If these issues do not do the trick, there's always the school board election or the school budget referendum. Everyone has kids.

By definition, a good big-city citizen is one who registers, votes, and knows the issues on which he bases his choice. It takes more than that in Suburbia—but it's a lot more fun. Once the citizen learns that his personal efforts can have a serious effect on the final decision, he enters into a new relation with his neighbors.

Last year I helped organize a township citizens' league to study local problems: garbage disposal; democratic nomination of school board members; overlapping of town and village government. I was elected chairman. The total membership was smaller than my Workmen's Circle branch in the city, but every meeting was front page news in the local paper. The mayor, the township supervisor, the school board members came to speak and seek help. Strangers nodded to me at the station. Even the chairman of the town Republican organization called me and said, "Now, Harry. . . ."

What has this to do with the urban versus the suburban Jew?

The urban Jew has been seduced by the pundit and the politician. He himself may not vote the way the papers say he will, but out of his inward uneasiness he tends to accept the casual handing over of a Jewish bloc to the Democratic or liberal Republican nominee. In Suburbia, where you can actually see the votes fall and the power divide, things are different.

The forecasters spoke so knowingly of the increase in Democratic votes because of the influx of urban voters into Suburbia. But a 100 per cent increase in the Jewish vote in our area somehow didn't budge the rock-hard Republican majority. The bloc didn't work. Not yet, anyway. The Jewish voter, so much closer to the political realities, found he wasn't a bloc. He was far more important in swaying decisions, even if they were smaller decisions, but his vote wasn't in the bag. If it were not that so many turned so easily into Republicans, I would say it's a good thing.

THE synagogue symbolizes the most important change in the move to Suburbia—a change in our concept of ourselves as Jews. In the rest of the country the leaders of the Jewish community can argue about who represents The Jews. AJCommittee, AJCongress, B'nai B'rith, Jewish Labor Committee, Workmen's Circle, the synagogue councils, each represents substantial numbers of Jews, and each, at times, presumes to speak for The Jews. But none of them represents a really significant portion of the five million. In Suburbia, there is no question about who speaks for us.

There has never been an American equivalent of the civil power of the organized Jewish community in the *shtetl* of the Pale or in British Palestine. The Federations and Welfare Funds in the big cities claim some kind of hegemony, but actually they don't have it, except (what an exception!) over fund-raising. The closest thing to a Jewish community in the United States is the suburban synagogue. True, its power is only psychological. It is, nonetheless, real. The Jew is perforce a member of his religious community. Even if he refuses to accept formal membership, he does not openly dispute the synagogue's right to speak for him.

Like any broad statement regarding human beings, there are numerous exceptions. There are those whose conformity is rebellion. However, the measure of the truth of that statement is that it holds true for even our group, which had so much training in non-conformity.

Part of our refusal to accept spokesmen in the city was that we found it unnecessary to think seriously of ourselves as Jews. We resented the spokesman (usually identified with our employers) who called us to account and then told the world what we thought, felt, wanted. How did he know? Here, there are fewer of us. We are a measurable, countable quantity. Perhaps we feel the return of a fear we thought we had lost,

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or, if not quite that, then a certain anxiety.

In moving from city to suburb we had, if only subconsciously, a vision of a less "Jewish" existence. Though the accusation has been made by various kinds of ideological and institutional zealots, this is not a running away from *Yiddishkeit.* But it is a running away from the ghetto, however plush-lined. It is running away from life within a bloc—political, social, cultural. One aspect of our relations with our fellow citizens had been pre-determined and we couldn't successfully fight it in the city. In Suburbia, if only because of the smaller and more copable numbers, we could help fashion our own personal and group relations. But, paradoxically, this makes us more conscious of ourselves as a group. Further, it makes us more of a group. So already there are zealots of another kind, who worry about the dangers of Jewish huddling together, clannishness, in the suburbs. (Always something new to worry about.)

The old choices were: acceptance of tieless, rootless community without community contacts; constant rebellion, which is tiring as you grow older; hysterical adoption of what is a foreign culture even if it does include Hebrew, dancing the *hora,* and playing the *chalil.* But, as we early sensed, wasn't the last no more than a going back, in another guise, to the zealotry we left in bohemia?

WE REJECTED these. Still, in seeking a less "Jewish" existence, no matter how subtly expressed, we find in Suburbia a more "Jewish" existence. (If the reader equates "less 'Jewish' existence" with "better existence" the equation is in his own mind, not this reporter's.)

When we looked over the communities into which we might move, we checked around to find out whether there were other Jews living there. If there were none, or too few, we presumed that positive efforts had been made to keep them out. This is an attraction to some but not to us. So we looked further. And when we found that the community was 99 per cent Jewish, we also looked further.

In one sample area in Suburbia, covering most of two townships, there are about 1,000 Jewish families among 6,000 non-Jewish. This area supports three synagogues—one Conservative-*cum*-Reform, fairly old and well established; one fairly new, Conservative-*cum*-Orthodox; one very new, ultra-progressive. Between them these synagogues have about 550 families officially enrolled—50 per cent plus of the potential. This percentage is not striking when compared to small or isolated towns away from metropolitan centers. Compared with New York City, from which many of these families moved during the past eight years, it is tremendous.

An easy assumption would ascribe this marked increase in synagogue membership to the increased religious feeling that is supposed to mark the last decade. The trouble is the assumption is too easy. So, too, is the assumption that the increase is due to the greater pressures toward conformity in a circumscribed milieu. It must be remembered that, for our group, with our background, going to synagogue is in itself an act of *non*-conformity.

The average metropolitan Jew is not a synagogue member. If pushed for a reason, he may cite principle, lack of interest, laziness, or busyness. His religious observance is restricted to services for the dead and staying home from work on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. He may feel vaguely that he'd like his son to be Bar Mitzvah, but the accidents of neighborhood and his son's friends will be more determinative. The number of circumcisions holds up, but more and more are done by the obstetrician rather than by the *mohel.* But move this average Jew to Suburbia and chances are he'll join up.

One suburban rabbi discounted the entire premise of the above. "Percentages seem to bear you out," he said. "But I doubt their validity. Middle-income and upper-income Jews have a higher percentage of synagogue membership even in the city. And it is these Jews who move to the suburbs. It is not so much that the non-member Jew moves out here and joins, but that the city synagogue member moves and transfers his membership."

The rabbi spoke without benefit of questionnaires or surveys. He admitted he was arguing from sense and feeling rather than numbers. It is true that a majority of the new suburbanites are in the over-$5,000 a year class and that this group, wherever they live, has a better record of synagogue mem-

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bership than the lower-income levels. But a member of his own board of directors said, "I wouldn't belong to the temple in the city. I do here."

A second rabbi's experience was opposite. "Most of my new congregation are new to synagogue experience," he said. "In the city it takes an effort to become a member. You have to make the decision, go find a synagogue, walk in, and join. Usually, no one helps you, even at the last stage. So it's easier not to join. But out here it's the path of least resistance to join."

Since there isn't one Suburbia, the relationship between the synagogue and the new Suburbanite varies with the type of community into which he moves. In the completely new settlements in Long Island and New Jersey they build their new synagogues in the collective image of their new consciousness and old memories. The new centers are sparked by the younger men rather than the older. They have very active women's groups and very progressive Sunday schools. These tend to be more Orthodox, or closer to traditional Orthodoxy, than the older synagogues. But in the established synagogues of the old communities the pattern is far more complex.

Life in the Jewish communities in the suburbs must have been serene and unrippled before the war. There was a high degree of social, economic, political, religious uniformity. As the latter uniformity disappeared, the serenity went with it. Today the financial picture of the community ranges from economic noses just above the water to the older too-plush, too-comfortable unawareness of reality. The political complexion runs from rosy red to stark white. Backgrounds vary from fifth generation German-Jewish stock to first generation East European. Add to these differences the usual coolness between the old settler and the newcomer and the trouble is built in.

Some old synagogues made positive efforts to keep the new wave from washing away the old ease. Some welcomed the first newcomers, and then, suddenly aware of what they saw as brashness and pushing, tried to stem the tide by running out of seats or raising the dues. By and large, neither of these attempts was successful. The differences usually are resolved when the newcomers can out-vote the old-timers.

One of the anticipated advantages of the small town—even a "bedroom" town—was the transfer of part of our social life into the small-town neighborhood community. And this came to pass, as it does to most emigrees. But the friendships built up in the suburban community are no more accidents of propinquity than are city friendships. Friendships develop from likenesses in interests, age and economic levels, dislikes. Sometimes you find them in the families next door. Usually you find them in families around the corner or across the plaza.

It is the village neighborliness—the same neighborliness that permits a "good morning" to any man seen at the station more than twice, and most of the women; an occasional beer with the man next door; a joint effort with the man across the street in clearing the leads and gutters—that builds the first pressures toward membership in the synagogue. The man next door may go to Immaculate Conception, the man across the street to St. Luke's, and the man on the other side may spend his Sundays at Lee Hills Country Club, but this man is a Jew. He knows it, his neighbors know it, and the other Jews in the community know it. Some positive action seems indicated.

Life in Suburbia is highly organized. Most people have some organizational ties to their neighbors. The civic organization keeps an eye on tax rates, traffic on residential streets, and exceptions to the zoning code. So we joined the civic organization. The first time we sat with our next-door neighbor. The next time we sat with that couple who supported our stand on school taxes. At the PTA we picked up a few more kindred souls. Since our politics are liberal, and there are few enough other liberals, we were close friends very soon.

Some among these new friends are Jews. Jews find Jews, especially when the cover of millions is removed and you count yourselves in hundreds. The man and wife who sided with us at the civic organization are people we know. When they repeat at the PTA, they're probably people we visit. If they also can commiserate politically, we're well on our way to friendship. If they happen to be Jews—we start speaking the truth to each other. And we find that the major social organization among the Jews is the

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synagogue. Our new friend goes and his friends go. If we don't go the occasions for seeing our new friends are limited.

There are some little things, too, that add up. Here, in Suburbia, we buy tickets from the police and firemen—and not as a propitiatory gesture. The firemen do have the most wonderful fireworks display on the Fourth of July and the police do fly Santa Claus in to the ball field in a helicopter. It's not worth a buck and a quarter each? It's the same with the bazaars. We buy tickets and go to the Catholic church shindig. But the synagogue bazaar is really a *heimishe simcha*. That weekend we set our principles or lack of interest or laziness aside and go —and find our new friends. Pretty soon they have us cornered.

MORE fundamental are the problems raised by the kids. Somehow we don't worry so much in the city about the problem of children's identifying themselves with the Jewish community. On the street, in the school, among their friends—and even at home—they find out what they are and what it means. But when your street, counting both sides, has twenty houses, twenty families, and only one other than your own is Jewish, you wonder and worry. How will the child know that he is Jewish and what it is to be a Jew? So we look about the house and take inventory.

My wife doesn't *bench licht* and I don't own a *tallis*. The *mezuzah* is gone from the door. (In the city there always was one left from tenant to tenant.) So outside our telling him so, and the occasional Jewish *meichel*, how will he know?

One answer is the gradual introduction into the home of Jewish objects: holiday-explaining records and books, a menorah, a Haggadah. But most parents' knowledge of Judaism is nine parts feeling and one part fact. This feeling cannot be so easily transferred to the children. So we hurriedly read a chapter ahead of the child. Next year we'll send him to Sunday school.

The synagogue board of directors has the Sunday school fees rigged. It's just as cheap to join the synagogue and send your child as it is to send him without joining. I don't know whether we'll resist the bargain.

There is a tendency to drop membership or activity after the Bar Mitzvah period, whether the boy goes through the ceremony or not. But immediately, new problems arise.

Intellectually, many of us will maintain that the religion of the girl our son brings home is of minor importance. (It's of greater importance in the boy our daughter brings home.) But this is not an intellectual business. Our inheritance from *Bube* and *Zeide* outweigh liberal logic. Common interests, common backgrounds, chances of conflict—whatever rationalizations we use—we prefer that our children marry Jews. This you do not leave to chance. In the city the odds are in your favor. Out here you stack the odds.

The answer, again, is in the social organization of the synagogue. The friendships the children make in school are either strengthened or weakened by participation in the synagogue's junior league. The fifteen- and sixteen-year-old doesn't go to night clubs, at least not in our community. His dancing is done either at home or in a community social center. You send him to the synagogue. I doubt that parents deliberately plan this maneuvering of their children's social lives—but that's the way it works.

Each of the above reasons for change has some validity. A place to go. A place to belong. A continuum through our children. But they are not enough. Our early lack of physical and philosophical connection with the synagogue was casual. Our later positive rejection of the synagogue was—we thought —principled. Our present positive identification seems somehow unprincipled. Our earlier Jewishness was untroubled and untortured. Today it has a nagging quality.

The nose-counters and dues-collectors are quite pleased with the upward curve of memberships and contributions. But are the members and contributors also pleased? So many of us do belong to the synagogue. And many of us do send our children to Sunday school. But there's a consciousness of loss that cannot be exactly pinned down.

When we were children there was nothing special about being a Jew in our kid relationships. Or about Luigi's being Italian. We knew it and let it lay. Later, when I was madly in love with Eileen, Mom mumbled about the *shikses*, but the rest of the community took it for granted. They also took for granted that a marriage would not come out of this passion. To use a

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political analogy: the Jews and Italians and Irish were commonwealths within a federal republic. In the suburbs the separate segments of the community seem more like allied sovereign nations speaking slightly different dialects of the same root language. We maintain cordial relations and cooperate on political and civic fronts. But we live apart. Our children are made aware of this apartness too young.

PERHAPS this, too, is a coming full circle. My great-grandfather lived in a tightly knit clan culture. Will this be true of my children? But to expect or want this—isn't it an unrealistic nostalgia for a hazy past inexorably lost? And if this development did come about, wouldn't the price be too high? Maybe the people who worry about the return of clannishness, the building of a wall (even a fancy wall) between ourselves and our neighbors, have a point. Or do they?

And mixed up in all this there is a sense of betrayal. Some of my friends cover it by sneering at their past, especially their Village past. They speak of that period as if it had been a kind of adolescent aberration, best forgotten, or, if remembered, to be laughed off. The trouble is, they also laugh off or forget those very sound and decent values we fought for, and helped establish for ourselves and all the rest of America during that period.

Others in the old gang cover their uneasiness with hyper-activity in the traditional areas—Federation, or the synagogue, or Israel, or even the Jewish Labor Committee. But they work too hard at it.

But why a sense of betrayal at all? We haven't really sold out. We haven't changed essentially. (Of course, if this is to give you any reassurance, you must learn to brush off those sneering accusations from the old leftist friends.) This life in Suburbia is no more, and no less, "American" than life in the East Bronx. No reason why it should be.

We came out of a comfortable world. Our enemies were tagged, known, positioned on a physical and ideological map. It isn't true any more. We live among those ancient class enemies. The class-enemy *goy* we didn't recognize in Luigi and Staish lives next door. We know now (hope anyway) that he isn't the enemy we thought. Sometimes we wonder.

Many of us turn for satisfying answers to our many questions, not to the cosmic dicta of the communal organizations, or to the intricate scientific analyses, but inward. It is important to integrate the inner and outer man—the school, the grass, the defense, the factual learning—with the Jew. This is a private process, and a longer story—of which we have so far seen only the beginnings.

In all the above there is little mention of those who come to the synagogue because this is the place where Torah lives. But these are the minority in Suburbia, as they are everywhere.

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THAT BIG DEAL WITH THE RUSSIANS

A Realistic Look at the New Realism

PETER MEYER

AS THE years of the cold war lengthen, America grows weary and peevish with the demands made upon her energy, steadfastness, and capacity for sacrifice. If only the fact of an aggressive world Communist movement were not there to interrupt our practice of the arts of peace and poison our ease! More and more, on every side, we see efforts to blink this fact.

There are the Little Budgeteers and the Big Budgeteers. The Little Budgeteers assure one fatuously that the Leninist strategy aims at making us spend ourselves into bankruptcy; they even pretend that Lenin actually uttered such nonsense, putting quotation marks around the phrase. Save, save, save, they cry, the Communist threat is mainly internal. They are ready to defend the free world—but only if it doesn't cost too much. The Big Budgeteers cry spend, spend, spend —to buy the good will of friends and enemies alike, with, of course, "no strings attached" (one doesn't "dictate" to an ally) that might bind our friends into a common military defense against a common enemy. Anyhow, the enlightened know that not guns but the standard of living decides.

THE chorus of retreat and capitulation—though it is of course not called that—swells louder and louder. One recent and persistent note in all this uproar is that sounded by the advocates of the Big Deal: these neo-realists, coming from both the "left" and "right," warn us against immature moralizing over Communism and urge a "live and let live" policy. *Fire in the Ashes*, Theodore H. White's new book on Europe, a Book-of-the-Month Club selection published by Sloane Associates, is a popularized and persuasive statement of this Big Deal point of view and a well-calculated appeal to the present American mood of weariness and impatience.

Mr. White paints the socio-political portraits of present-day France, Germany, and England, the leading figures on the European stage; his book is both well written and well informed. The basic attitudes of these nations, the main characteristics of their social structure, the problems of their political systems, and the determinants of their foreign policy, are analyzed lucidly and coherently. The book also contains a quite remarkable survey of the history, achievements, and problems of the Marshall Plan, the NATO military alliance, and the plans for European integration.

One may quarrel with many details, but on the whole the author's description of events and tendencies in Western Europe is persuasive. It is only when it comes to the

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AFTER twenty years of vigorous idealism culminating in the victorious crusade against Nazism, Americans, says PETER MEYER, are now showing a tendency to lend their ears to the persuasions of "realists": reactionary ones who would prefer to let the world go hang, relying on the Policy of the Big Bang—the atomic bomb—to keep us safe; and liberal and conservative ones urging the Policy of the Big Deal—a negotiated settlement with the Soviet Union that, we are told, will put an end to the cold war. In his article Mr. Meyer is chiefly concerned with this second kind of "realism," as it is popularly represented in Theodore H. White's recent book, *Fire in the Ashes*. Mr. Meyer is well known to COMMENTARY readers as an authority on international Communism; his article "Soviet Anti-Semitism in High Gear" appeared in our February 1953 issue. He is co-author of the recently published *Jews in the Soviet Satellites* (Syracuse University Press), a study sponsored by the Library of Jewish Information of the American Jewish Committee.

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Soviet Union and world Communism that Mr. White's analytical powers and insight seem to desert him. What is wanting is any understanding that the Soviet problem is more than a psychological or public-relations one, that behind the misunderstanding, appetite for discipline, captiousness, and morbid fears which Mr. White adduces, there may be massive social forces impelling the Soviet system along its expansive course.

According to Mr. White, the great danger of Communism is "not the evil but the attraction of it." The "magic appeal" of Communism is simple: it is the belief that "pure logic," when applied to human affairs, is enough to change the world and abolish all its troubles. The "fatal flaw" of such a credo, Mr. White contends, is that human beings tend to be illogical. It is to correct this illogicality that Communism must impose its rigid discipline. Any political organization striving to be totally logical requires a total discipline; total discipline requires an omnipresent police, which in turn leads to total terror. The weakness of Communism lies "less in the calculated immorality of terror than in the endless appetite of discipline." The area of discussion shrinks, fewer and fewer men have access to the facts, the leadership becomes less and less capable of wise decisions—all this leading to great blunders.

THERE is of course some truth to this description. But is this the gravamen of our charge against Communism? Has a democrat no more fault to find than this, that Communism is guilty of overweening pretensions to logicality? Surely not. Mr. White's argument rather accepts uncritically the Communists' own rationalization of their system: terror is needed to force people to act "according to their logical interests."

Discipline does not beget the Soviet system of exploitation, terror, and expansion; rather is it one of its features, one of its operative means. Blind discipline is needed to hold together a society riven by deep inner conflicts, a regime whose promise is almost absolutely contradicted by its reality. Communist logic is a kind of insanity.

A heretical Communist may see the main evil of the Soviet system in its "excessive" discipline. But men whose criticism of Soviet society goes beyond Trotsky's and Tito's are more concerned about "the calculated immorality of terror" which murders millions of people in the jails and concentration camps than about the stupefying effect of discipline on the brains of Communist leaders.

It is not enough to be "against" Communism. We need to understand its driving forces. We face a crucial question: either Soviet expansion is basically a result of misunderstandings, self-imposed misinformation, excessive discipline, fatal blunders by the Soviet leaders, their morbid fears and hysteria—in which case a policy of psychotherapeutic patience, combining negotiation and concession, is called for, animated by the hope that the compulsive, overdisciplined, expansionist generation in the Kremlin will in time be replaced by more secure, easygoing, and moderate men. Or else the expansion, the striving for world domination, is a basic feature of world Communism and the Soviet system—in which case the free world must be prepared to defend itself until such time as the Soviet system collapses or is overthrown by a combination of pressure from without and the revolutionary pressures it generates within.

THERE is little doubt that Mr. White holds with the first alternative. Thus, in describing the opening of the East-West rift in '45, he would seem to imply that it was mainly due to a misunderstanding: Churchill and Stalin had divided up their spheres of influence in the Balkans, giving Rumania to the Soviet Union and Greece to England. But when Vishinsky "journeyed down to Bucharest to take possession of the prize deeded to Russia in Moscow," the Americans began to stamp and shout, and "this obscure incident" must have been "one of the initial shocks" to Russian diplomacy. It evoked Soviet suspicion, a "morbid," "hysterical" suspicion, to be sure, but one—the context implies—which was not entirely groundless. The Russians thought that they

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had made a business deal at Yalta; but America suddenly began to take the words "democracy" and "free elections" literally, and to interpret them in a way the Russians could not understand.

Is not this theory of misunderstanding an oversimplification, to say the least? It closes its eyes to the entire history of world Communism. It ignores the plain fact that a final clash with "world capitalism" has always been envisaged in the Communist program. It overlooks the fact that the Soviet government was preparing its postwar expansion during the period of the Soviet-Nazi pact, as well as during its wartime alliance with Western powers; its every step, from building up Communist partisan movements in Yugoslavia, Greece, and Albania which did their best to exterminate the pro-Western resistance forces, to Soviet espionage in Washington, aimed at extending the Soviet empire.

Certainly, the Communist leaders made many mistakes, and Mr. White gives us a long list of them, from China in 1927 to Yugoslavia in 1948. I too think that nothing is more foolish than to attribute infallible cunning and powers of calculation to the rulers of the Kremlin. They often behave stupidly, succeeding only because of the bigger blunders of their ignorant and timid adversaries. But whatever their blunders, the will to world power was never missing, and the will to use every means towards it.

And the prophets of "relaxation" in Russia have behind them a series of errors and false predictions matching Mr. White's catalogue of Stalinist stupidities. They saw the approaching self-liquidation of Communist dictatorship in Lenin's New Economic Policy in 1921; they expected the end of Communist subversion and revolution from Trotsky's elimination and the triumph of Stalin's doctrine of "socialism in one country" in 1924; they predicted the coming democratization of Russia when Stalin's "liberal" constitution was proclaimed in 1936, just before the Great Purge; they even thought that the extermination of Old Bolsheviks in the purge heralded an era of peaceful coexistence. They saw Communism passing out of its aggressive "phase" with the Soviet entry into the League of Nations, in the Popular Front tactics, in the wartime dissolution of the Comintern. They were deceived—and served to deceive others—so often that one might think they would be more careful in 1954.

In the 20's and 30's, Lenin and Trotsky were described as dogmatic fanatics, and Stalin with his fellow bureaucrats as the realistic conservatives. Today, Mr. White—and many others—represent Stalin as the evil genius who, with his dogmatism and hysterical suspicions, drove Russia into internal crises and foreign expansion, while the new generation, represented by Malenkov, is middle-aged, conservative, and on the whole content with what it has. After all, most of these men are engineers and administrators, the Russian opposite number of Western businessmen. It is Mr. White's hope and expectation that these men will bring about a relaxation in foreign policy and military pressure. "For an indefinite number of months and years, the Western world may find itself face to face with a more relaxed Russia."

But the Stalinist generation was also middle-aged when it rose to power in the late 20's. And it, too, was made up largely of engineers and administrators eager to enjoy their new material privileges and develop the resources of the country now under their domination. They wanted to "live better and happier" and would have chosen a quieter life—if they could have. But the totalitarian regime is shot through with contradictions: slave and semi-slave labor is of low productivity; the absence of democratic economic and political controls encourages snowballing errors in planning, parasitism, and wastage on a tremendous scale. The bitter exploitation to which the majority are subjected demands a huge, expensive, and unproductive machinery of suppression; the ever widening gulf between promises and realities has to be filled with scapegoats, at home and abroad, and leads to recurrent purges that further disorganize society. The concentration of all the resources of society

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in a single hand can produce spectacular results in some respects, but only at the price of huge disproportions. One of these disproportions—between the development of industry and agriculture—drove the Stalin regime into the adventure of wholesale collectivization in the early 1930's, which in turn helped bring about the crisis that ended in the great purges of the later 1930's. When Nikita Khrushchev recently lifted a corner of the veil of secrecy over the true facts of the Soviet economy, the surprised world learned that collectivization had not solved but rather aggravated the basic problem: after thirty years of much trumpeted progress, "modernized" Soviet agriculture was maintaining less live stock and producing less animal food than in 1916.

The "limitless expansion" always envisaged by bureaucratic planning in the USSR is not only rendered illusory by the natural limits of manpower, food, and raw materials; it is also frustrated by obstacles of a social and economic character. The Soviet system cannot eliminate the wastage of lives and goods incident upon the exploitation of unfree labor. It cannot eliminate bureaucratic misplanning and parasitism. The evils of "bureaucratism" are incessantly attacked in party resolutions and in purges, but continue to multiply as long as democratic controls are excluded. And how could they not be, since to admit them would mean the beginning of the end for the dictatorship?

In the early 30's, the crisis in economic relations between town and countryside, caused by the city's not producing enough goods to offer the peasants in exchange for their agricultural products, was "solved" by collectivizing the independent peasants; in the late 30's, the manpower shortage was "relieved" by the mass conscription of slave labor; and the economic breakdown at the end of the war was "overcome" by looting the satellite countries. Thus every new economic crisis was met by extending totalitarian controls over new classes or countries. Mr. White thinks it was only sheer stupidity that made the Kremlin turn the satellites into slums instead of keeping them as showwindows of Soviet prosperity. But he is wrong. The Soviet ruling class *needed* the factories, the products, and the manpower of these countries to prop up Russia's tottering economic system. And the Kremlin could not allow the "half-socialist" People's Democracies to enjoy standards of living that were luxurious when compared with those of a Russia that was supposed to be in the "higher stage of Communism."

The Soviet leaders simply cannot act "sensibly" if to do so means to change the structure of Soviet society or to compromise their own basic interests.

In estimating the temper of the new generation of Soviet rulers, the realities of the culture and society in which they grew up must be taken into account. They were educated in fear and brutality; they could rise only at the expense of masses of other human beings, and only by suppressing every feeling of loyalty and sympathy within themselves. The biography of every one of them is a record of intrigues, deceptions, denunciations, murders. The thing they cherish most is power—collective power for their class and state, personal power for themselves. Beria's execution, the mass arrests in Eastern Germany, the permanent terror in China and North Korea, show how little has changed since Stalin's departure.

As yet the Soviet Union has not surrendered a single real position in her foreign policy. At the recent Berlin meeting of Foreign Ministers, Molotov flatly refused to yield an inch on Germany, Austria, or anywhere else. The dictatorship in Russia and the satellites has not been eased a jot; the present policy of granting economic concessions to the consumers only repeats Lenin's strategy of partial retreat as expressed in the NEP: make temporary economic concessions, at the same time strengthen the dictatorship and sharpen the terror. It is designed only to prepare the way for a further tightening of the reins, with the driver in a securer seat. The Soviet rulers could perhaps be compelled to retreat further than they intend if the free world were united, resolved

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to press every advantage, and aware of the fact that, not the new generation of bureaucrats, but their victims, are its friends within the Soviet empire. Do we need more than ordinary common sense to recognize that if the free world relaxes, putting its hopes on the good non-political "engineers" in the Politburo, this will only serve to reconsolidate their power and invite new aggression on their part?

This is the light in which we have to look at Mr. White's practical proposals. He stresses that American strategy cannot be merely defensive, but must also be offensive, and there can be little quarrel about that; but his practical application of this principle is dubious, to say the least.

Mr. White's main defensive recommendation is to stop further European rearmament! The NATO, it is true, provides but a thin screen of defense that could, at best, hold only the advance echelon of the Soviet armies, and that only on the condition that the twelve German divisions provided for in the European Defense Treaty enter the picture soon. But Mr. White thinks that NATO's present forces offer a sufficient shield, and he would not bother about the German divisions, but would devote all available means to economic improvement. This is the old slogan of butter against guns. What is strange is that so many of its present advocates never recommended it when the guns were Hitler's. True, a hungry country cannot defend itself well, but countries with relatively high standards of living have succumbed many times in the past to poorer enemies because they were too lazy and too selfish to provide an adequate defense for themselves.

As for the "offensive approach" recommended by Mr. White, its aim is to win over the communities that lie between the Atlantic-American and the Soviet bloc, meaning the nations of Asia and Africa. Again, the end is laudable but the means very chancy. Should we support and organize the forces that are ready to join with us, or should we give them up and woo the neutralists instead, and even some of our present enemies, in hopes of weaning the latter away from Russia? Mr. White recommends the second way.

First, he tells us, people in Asia are not ripe for democracy. World problems "cannot be resolved by the vote of illiterate peasants." The governments imposed on these people persist and succeed only insofar as they claim the loyalty of the conscious few and offer outlets to their ambition. All that backward peoples ask is that the governments they are saddled with at least appear to be their own, not those of alien white men, and that they bring some tiny visible improvements in their daily life. Freedom, as it developed in the West, is according to Mr. White "a unique growth." It does not suit Asia and Africa—although it "may" develop there "later."

This does not read as if written by a man with deep democratic convictions. It makes democracy a rare flower, and leaves four-fifths of the world to dictatorships. At first glance, it might seem a plea for Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-shek—but this is not at all what Mr. White means. His "ambitious few" are the Communists; he concludes with a plea for a "basic strategy" that would try to "magnetize" Red China away from Russia.

THE first "offensive" move in his plan is—to abandon Indochina. France should negotiate directly with Ho Chi Minh, even "if it means that Indochina must be split in two as most countries on the Communist border are."

But really, is this possible? In Indochina, where the war is largely a guerrilla one, there is not one front, one demarcation line, as in Korea. To establish an armistice line would mean in practice to evacuate French and Vietnamese garrisons from cities and ports north of the line, while Communist infiltration south of the line would be stepped up. This could only result—very quickly—in the complete loss of the country. It would seem that this is what Mr. White really has in mind, for he asserts, a few lines later, that his policy would "liquidate a colonial domain repulsive to South-East Asian communities."

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This, he feels, would "bring about a general peace," but it is only too evident that the opposite is true: the fall of Thailand and Burma would come next, followed by attacks on Indonesia and India. Why Mao should abandon his alliance with Russia just when it has helped him to conquer one half of Asia and promises him easy conquest of the other half—this is a mystery Mr. White does not explain. Like all advocates of Chinese appeasement, he contents himself with some vague phrases about "magnetizing away" the Chinese from the Russians, "natural strains reasserting themselves," etc. For this, the West is to give Asia to Mao, with economic aid attached!

The second "offensive" move proposed by Mr. White is to call off German rearmament and give up on the European Defense Treaty in exchange for Russia's consenting to German reunification. A united Germany, Mr. White feels, would be solidly rooted in the European community, while Western Germany, with twelve divisions under Allied command, might go over to Russia. This is a strange view—a defenseless Germany, with the East German Communist apparatus intact inside her, is supposed to be more resistant to Russian threats than a moderately armed West Germany making part of the European Community. This is also to disregard the possibility that a united Germany might one day rearm without seeking the permission of the Western powers, who could not oppose such rearmament without driving Germany into the arms of Russia. However you turn Mr. White's proposal, it would seem to work to Soviet advantage.

It is useful at this point to take a backward glance at the well-known *Thunder Out of China,* of which Mr. White was the co-author and which appeared some years ago, also as a Book-of-the-Month Club choice. It too was a well-done job, combining vivid first-hand stories with much background material, and some sharp criticism of the reactionary features of Chinese society. But it also contained such statements as: "those who visited Communist territories escaped from the oppression of the Kuomintang into what seemed an area of light." Mr. White thought that the Chinese Communists "have been more democratic than the Kuomintang" and that they "sought peace" in the civil war. One could learn from his book that Russia's attitude toward China "had been one of impeccable aloofness" until "our policy" produced the "monstrous result" of "ranging her on the side of the Communists against the United States." In other words, this excellent piece of popular reporting contained a lot of misinformation, and the advice Mr. White and people like him had to offer proved disastrous.

In 1946, when *Thunder Out of China* first appeared, the greater part of China and even a part of Manchuria were in the National government's hands and the struggle for the country was still far from decided. For America, there were two possible courses. One was to give the National government all feasible economic and military support against the Communists, exacting, as the price of that support, far-reaching agrarian, fiscal, and administrative reforms. Proof that such a policy was possible is to be found in the belated American experience in South Korea and Formosa, where the local regimes have been compelled to introduce effective administrative and land reforms. In 1946, much more American pressure and assistance would have been required, but the results would also have been much greater.

Mr. White and others counselled differently: America should halt her military aid to the Chinese government and force the Kuomintang into a coalition with the Communists, who though participating in the central administration would be allowed to maintain their local governments and local armies. The example of Eastern Europe, where such coalition governments cleared the way for the harsh Communist dictatorships, did not deter Mr. White.

The kind of policy Mr. White recommended was actually adopted. General Marshall tried to get Chiang Kai-shek to accept a coalition with Mao; when he refused, American military aid was temporarily suspended.

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Was this defeat inevitable? In spite of many declamations that "it is impossible to halt the revolution . . . in China and Asia," Mr. White considered a defeat of Chinese Communists possible—but *not desirable*. In an eloquent passage he conceded that a "total victory of the Kuomintang" was feasible with massive American help. So reunified, China might have had a "flourishing industry," "expanding railways," "rising factories"; but it would have been a "historic monstrosity" and a "menace to all the Orient." Such a China would have possessed all the skills of modern science, but "under the direction of men rooted in the barbarism of feudal antiquity. . . ." Today in Communist China the tools of modern science are wielded by men steeped in the more modern, cruel, and dangerous barbarism of the totalitarian kind.

IN *Fire in the Ashes*, American foreign policy is again exhorted not to conduct crusades, but rather to make deals. The kind of deals Mr. White has in mind, we saw a few pages back. What sort of philosophy lies behind these counsels of retreat? It is by no means Mr. White's philosophy alone. It borrows something from George F. Kennan's trenchant criticism of American moralism and legalism, and his advocacy of a policy based upon realistic national interest. It takes something from the preachments of a whole school of commentators from Walter Lippman to Vera Micheles Dean. Our question is, how realistic is this "realism"?

In the 19th century, political life developed within national states and limited empires. Their interests clashed, but the conflicts could be solved by compromises; these sometimes prevented wars, and sometimes concluded them. No state or empire was strong enough to conquer the whole world, and conquest did not mean the complete enslavement or extinction of the conquered nation. As a rule, only revolutions and counter-revolutions were fought to the bitter end. Civil wars, in those days, were accounted the cruelest form of warfare.

All this changed with the emergence of the possibility of "one world" and with the rise of totalitarian empires aiming at the unification of the whole world in total slavery. In the 20th century, a policy of limited "national interest" has ceased to be adequate. After all, the supreme national interest is the survival of the nation in freedom and independence. Or, even more minimally, survival. But totalitarian movements always threaten the independence, and very often the survival, of other nations.

It was so under the Nazis. What deals in their "national interest" could the Poles, Czechs, and French have made with Hitler? Colonel Beck, President Hácha, and Marshal Pétain sought some kind of arrangement; they are regarded as traitors. The national interest of all these nations—and of the Russians, British, and Americans as well—required a "crusade," that is to say, complete victory over the Nazi regime, a war waged for liberation, and until liberation. And thus the realistic fight for survival became part of a world crusade against Nazism. One isn't likely to be challenged about this when speaking of the Nazis. How is the Russian drive for world domination different?

But cannot the fight against the totalitarian menace stop halfway? After the Thirty Years' War, the antagonists "abandoned their crusading and resigned themselves to adjustments," writes Mr. White, "permitting each ruler domestically to impose his religion on his own people in his own way." So should we, the implication is clear, resign ourselves to Malenkov's and Mao's imposing their rule on "their own" people in "their own way," from Czechoslovakia to Indochina.

THIS raises a moral question—one should like to say "agonizing" if neo-realism had not made such phrases seem in bad taste. Confronted with this moral question, all our realists have a callous and cynical sound to them. We have heard Mr. White argue that freedom and democracy make no sense in Asia and Africa; we can read the same theory, supported by pseudo-Marxist arguments, in Aneurin Bevan's *In Place of Fear*: only dictatorships of the Communist type

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can secure the necessary original accumulation of capital in backward countries. Yesterday the populations of the European satellite countries, today the masses of Asia, are declared too primitive to know and enjoy freedom. But there is freedom and freedom. It is not simply democratic political institutions that the deal with Communism sacrifices. Totalitarian tyranny is something qualitatively different from old-fashioned absolutism. To live under the Soviets does not mean just to lose one's vote and voice in public matters. The Big Deal means the degradation of 800 million people—merciless economic exploitation and psychological mass coercion for the great majority, death in slave labor camps for millions, execution for hundreds of thousands, the extermination of entire social, ethnic, and religious groups. Nobody with a bit of conscience can regard such a deal light-mindedly.

Still, it might perhaps be justified if the only alternative were a global war bringing still greater sufferings to mankind—if, that is, the deal did in fact prevent war.

But that is just the trouble: the deal is *not* realistic. It leads straight on to what it wishes to avoid. In the 20th century the rule, *cuius regio, eius religio,* is not only reactionary but also utopian. In the 17th century, economic and political problems were still largely local in reference, and Catholicism and Protestantism could survive in sullen and relative separation until time and tide made other issues more paramount. But today the world is more close knit than in the 17th century, and it is impossible to "transcend" the question of freedom or slavery as the denominational issue was transcended.

This is so not because the free are going to start a war to liberate the slaves, but because the totalitarian slaveholders will not halt their drive to enslave the free. The Soviet regime and the Communist movement are committed to the conquest of the world; only complete domination can end what they call "capitalist encirclement."

Does this mean "preventive war"? By no means. Mr. White simplifies the controversy to the point of falsification. Anyone against his deal is for a crusade, and "of the crusade as foreign policy little need be said." Crusade, "under whatever name it masquerades," whether "Rollback," "Liberation," or "Preventive Attack," means war, "war at the earliest opoprtunity" and without allies. It also means black repression at home. . . .

This picture has as much in common with reality as a cartoon in *Krokodil*. Mr. White would be hard put to it to name one serious and influential advocate of war "at the earliest opportunity" regardless of the wishes of our allies—though there are many responsible supporters of the policy of liberation.

WHAT Mr. White describes as a "crusade" actually means something else: the recognition of the inescapable central fact of the present world situation, namely, that the existence of a totalitarian empire and world movement is fundamentally and essentially irreconcilable with the security of the free world. At the end of a historical period whose exact length nobody can predict, the struggle must end either with the extinction of the free world or with the destruction of the Communist system. This may come about as the result of a war, if the Communists press matters to that conclusion, or of the disintegration of one of the opposing systems. Hence the necessity that the free world stand permanently ready to arms lest a war be suddenly forced upon it: it must conduct its policies in such a way as to fortify and consolidate its own forces, and disrupt and dismay the enemies'. This certainly does not preclude partial deals and limited agreements, when these secure our position. But the big deal which sacrifices forever our best potential allies, the victims of Soviet exploitation and terror, and stimulates illusions of security, can only weaken the free and strengthen the totalitarian camp. It is a sell-out in exchange for the promissory note of a power that has defaulted on every deal it ever made.

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THE HOT WAR OVER OUR SCHOOLS

The "3 R's" and the "Progressives" Meet Head On

SPENCER BROWN

We are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.
—Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach"

THAT there is a battle raging in American education is clear to everybody; just who is against whom—and what is the precise nature of the cultural, ideological, and psychological lances and trumpets that they employ—are puzzling questions, but not, I hope, beyond all conjecture. I propose to examine some of the sources of the dispute and to suggest some criteria for choosing sides and weapons. This may turn out a risky business. For my sideline comments, I fear, if heard at all above the din, will interest participants in the battle only by giving them another head to crack. But there is always the hope that they will be heard by bystanders willing to suspend judgment while they listen.

Facts on which all will agree are few but impressive. American public schools have in a century achieved general literacy, have turned out adults somehow capable of expanding a huge industrial plant and waging successful wars, and have at least not hampered the unification of a diverse mixture of peoples and their progress in political democracy. The schools have done so without greatly improving the social or financial status of the teacher, but with a vastly increased outlay of money and time for each pupil taught. They expect practically every child to go through twelfth grade and a continuously increasing number to go through college.

Though there are grave inequities in the money available for education in different states and a shortage of teachers varying from endemic to epidemic, the schools now have to face several problems as unprecedented as their past achievement: the need for simultaneous training in democratic theory and action and in technical and scientific skill to meet the most dangerous enemy we have yet had; the preservation of an expanding culture which daily augments its already crushing weight of facts, theories, techniques, and artistic achievements that need and deserve to be carried on and forwarded; a growth of population in the last dozen years so sudden that even housing it in school buildings is a major task; and the grand design of so teaching the many that the many may enjoy, in the leisure now afforded by material prosperity, an easy familiarity, once the privilege of a few, with the universe—or rather with the best its little inhabitants have thought, calculated, said, and sung about it and themselves.

That the last problem is a hope and an ideal less likely of achievement than the others is generally agreed. But it is urged with widely varying degrees of impatience by factions whose distrust of each other's degree of impatience amounts to a most bitter difference in kind. The number and scope of the other problems, moreover, make the prov-

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PERHAPS never before has the "question" of American education been discussed so widely and with so much heat as it is being discussed today. The trouble with this discussion, SPENCER BROWN suggests, is that the opposing armies have somehow failed to find a battleground on which to fight the matter out, the "progressives" attacking a straw man called "fascism" and the "traditionalists" retaliating vigorously against another straw man, usually called "John Dewey." Mr. Brown tries to find some clarification, drawing upon three recent books discussing modern education, but drawing also upon his own full experience as a teacher of English literature at the Fieldston School in New York City, a secondary school that tends to be regarded as "progressive" by the "traditionalists" and "traditional" by the "progressives." Mr. Brown's most recent contribution to COMMENTARY was his article "The Bible and a Liberal Education" in the October 1953 issue.

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erb *quot homines tot sententiae* an obsolete understatement: every man has three or four opinions, and he is willing to fight for them all at once in every direction. It is a little like the game of "Go," in which attacker becomes defender in one move, in an entirely new war.

In considering the shifting alliances and skirmishes, let us, at least for the moment, leave out the question of religion in the schools and the question of whether private schools and colleges have a democratic or cultural right to exist alongside tax-supported institutions. Likewise let us omit the question of federal aid to states and such related political questions as discrimination and government-subsidized research in quasi-military matters. Let us discuss only educational theory and practice, and let us also make the assumption that people are willing to pay for their schools.

THIS is quite a simplification; yet it may assist us, though the alarms are still confused and the plain still darkling, to make out what some of the shouting is about. We hear at least one steady roar: *our schools no longer teach our children how to read, write, and calculate!* If true in fact and implication, this charge is so serious that the schools stand utterly condemned. In the long run they would leave us defenseless militarily and politically; they would doom our cultural heritage certainly to inanition in a weak, dwindling aristocracy and possibly to complete extinction.

If this charge were made alone, it ought to be possible to gather the pertinent facts, draw a logical conclusion, and then act on that conclusion. But it is always supported by more philosophical charges, on which a much wider division of enthusiasm and vested interest is inevitable. One question asked by at least three groups—the philosophically sophisticated, the disingenuous who wish to lead education "back" to a fairly narrow training in conventional morals and perhaps a particular religious faith, and the ingenuous who want the same thing but propagandize more boorishly—is whether the schools have any right to stand for, or be dominated by, what is called "secular pragmatism," meaning the philosophy of John Dewey. Obviously this question has nothing to do with the children's actual ability to read, write, and calculate; but it is nearly always combined with a dim view of that ability.

There are other questions asked, not always related to either "secular pragmatism" or the children's basic skills. How much of family and community life should the schools be allowed to organize—or usurp? To what extent are the schools responsible for the alleged mechanized debasement of our culture? Should the schools be leaders or followers in the process of social change? Should they resist one kind of change and abet another? Even granting that methods of teaching should be determined by teachers and educators, who should determine what is to be taught and for what purpose—the educators, the general public, the consensus of the scholarly world? Whether or not the Three R's are the basic curriculum of the elementary schools, shall secondary and higher education be based chiefly on the sciences, the humanities, or the social sciences—or all three; or none of these, but rather training for "life-adjustment" or some enlightened vocational training? Is experience in the arts a necessary part of education, or is it a "frill" that can be dispensed with to appease taxpayers? Whom shall we try to educate, and how far?

THIS incomplete list gives a rather staggering idea of what the ordinary well-meaning citizen must somehow decide in order to promote the real interest of parents and children—assuming that the ordinary citizen has any control, however remote, over the gigantic machinery of American public schools. Competing for his allegiance, or for his simple assent, there seem to be two well-defined hostile groups, the traditionalists and the progressives. Each, supposedly, has a set of answers to all these and similar questions opposite to the other's answers.

Nothing could be much further from the truth. Grouplets of the same group answer the same question differently, or at least with different emphasis. At the sound of a confused alarm, however, all grouplets swallow their own opinions, follow that of their floor leader, close ranks, and start swinging. In such a situation it is not surprising that they hurt their own adherents quite as much as they hurt their enemies, and any children in the way are mercilessly trampled.

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A common assumption in the last few years, which I believe to be only partly true, is that the progressives have infiltrated all the public schools of the nation and have handed out enough jobs to their creatures to entrench themselves as the ruling bureaucracy. By 1950, it is assumed by both sides, all the schools are progressive. Stated thus, the assumption is palpably absurd. But the traditionalists, making almost this statement, have now passed over to the attack, having as it were nothing more to defend. Hence the phrase "the attack on the public schools" refers nowadays almost exclusively to a traditionalist attack, and the defenders are, ironically, the progressives. The emotional overtones of the military terms are of course used for more than they are worth by both sides. The attackers become St. George and the defenders the embattled farmers of Concord.

Aside from the factitious unity of catcalls and tub-thumping, however, there is no real unity on either side; nor could there be, with so many competing special interests and vocational divisions. The interest of parent and teacher is not always the same at any given moment, even if they work more or less harmoniously toward a distant objective. Psychiatrist, psychologist, and teacher often disagree fiercely if quietly. The psychiatrist seems to have recently changed his mind, or to have at last made himself understood, and now wishes the school to represent some of the toughness of reality and not an infinitely adaptable and permissive environment. The psychologist, long preoccupied with his learning processes of mice and men, his tables and I.Q.'s, is muscling in on the rich territory of emotional adjustment and guidance once under the rule of the psychiatrist. The teacher desiring to be flexible in a special case may be thwarted by the administrator who wants a peaceful school and job, or the administrator by the teacher who wants a quiet classroom. The administrator is not often content merely to administer efficiently; that is not how one makes a name for oneself. One should engage in research and publish the results of research; hence one manufactures a research project whose artificiality is apparent and onerous to teachers and students but difficult to detect in print or—that last refuge of the unstoppered mind—panel discussion.

Perhaps more fundamental is the division of education into three great zones, elementary, secondary, and "higher." Progressive theory has devoted itself mainly, and with most conspicuous success, to the kindergarten and elementary years. From Rousseau and Pestalozzi to the present, progressives have more and more tried to teach children by means of the concrete, the readily experienced, and have less and less depended on symbolic and abstract knowledge. A great many people, including most psychologists, would call this a sound development. Moreover, at his best the elementary teacher is strongly motivated by love of children (at his worst, he hates the brats and should be "guided" into a more remunerative occupation). On the other hand, the college teacher or scholar, always conscious of the intolerable and increasing burden of facts and problems in the world, and professionally (and properly) dealing with symbols, abstractions, and generalizations, finds this development sentimental, subversive of true education. He angrily denounces, as does Professor Arthur Bestor, the elementary theorists for pushing their theories into areas and dimensions they know nothing of. He is willing to admit that the learning process should go from the concrete to the abstract, but he is aghast that his students are still stuck in the concrete.

In between is caught the unhappy secondary-school teacher. He knows something of the achievements of psychology and educational theory in improving the process of learning. If his students come to him from a "progressive" elementary school, he sees that they have enjoyed school—something seldom true of schools in the past. He would like to see them continue to enjoy school, but he knows that some kinds of learning involve hard work. He has an uneasy respect for the world of scholarship and for the mature mastery of the arts of reading, writing, and mathematics. He wishes the students could master these and love learning as much as they love school "life." Even if, in the face of the overwhelming combined impact of the crude values of adolescence and a commercial culture, he succeeds in teaching the students the arts and sciences of our heritage and in making them love learning, he feels guilty of somehow betraying the "progressive tradition": colleges

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are known to be unprogressive, and he is preparing some or all of the students for college. Are they not becoming "verbal," bookish, academic? Are they not escaping from reality (ghastly plight) into such solitary vices as reading or scientific experimentation? Too often the secondary-school teacher solves his dilemma by depreciating the work he does best and dissipating his energies on extra-curricular activities and projects that, though educational, are physically exhausting, at best peripheral, and at worst (good teaching is notoriously poor copy) mere material for publicity handouts.*

Distinct from these groups but within the area of battle stands the plain parent. If a member of organized labor, he is likely to demand more education without specifying what education; if a professional man, more and better education; if a businessman, less and better education. These demands confuse the fray still further. The parent often says he does not care about theory, but he, like everybody else, is an expert on education, having once undergone it. He is inclined to think that schools nowadays are very fine and teach very little. In the good old days they were pretty terrible and taught him a great deal. Just when the good old days stopped is another question; one can usually guess it was about the number of years ago that the speaker is old, minus twenty.

The plain parent's expectations and observations, whatever their origin, form part of the steady roar referred to earlier: our children no longer learn to read, write, and calculate as children used to learn. And as we find ourselves coming back to the battle again, we note another adventitious but significant complication.

As THE traditionalists and progressives shout and slug it out, all sorts of shady characters rush up to offer their services. The traditionalists, the attackers, have the assistance of rather nasty pamphleteers whose ideal education is that which will cost least, or nothing, and of religious enthusiasts of all sorts and sects hoping to use the schools to promote their religion or religion in general. Such assistance, when the attacker has some degree of intellectual sophistication, is unwelcome, since it offers the defenders the opportunity of charging that the attacks "play into the hands of Allen Zoll," or some other crackpot. The fact that this defense is in the logic, and often the phrasing, typical of "popular front" propaganda has been pointed out, seldom to the embarrassment of the defenders.

The defenders are of course reinforced by the fog-bound Stalinoid liberals, who blithely ignore the fact that Soviet education is as rigid and militarized as the Nazi "Schools for Barbarians" that Erika Mann used to denounce Before the Pact. The defenders never distinguish between the politics of the straightforwardly anti-Stalinist George Counts and those of, say, Harold Rugg, who wallowing in a fog of political sentimentality, uses an infallibly unreliable sextant whenever (and it is often) he charts America's course. And yet both Rugg and Counts have been leaders in the segment of progressive educational opinion that advocates using the schools to "build a new social order."

Most attacks, and all the unsophisticated attacks, on current education have introduced the issue of Stalinism. It is hard to see how this could be avoided, since practically all Stalinist teachers claim to be progressive and none support the traditionalists. Since the defection of Mrs. Bella Dodd, former Communist leader in the American Federation of Teachers, common New York knowledge has been verified: there were, in the late 1930's and early 1940's, about a thousand party members in the teaching profession in New York (one in forty) and about fifteen hundred in the whole country. The party "fraction" in the small New York Teachers Union and the smaller College Teachers Union was, I believe, the largest the party had in any teachers' organization in America. Obviously its influence extended far beyond the core of party members, who ran the unions as an appendage of 13th Street. They must have indoctrinated many students, and they certainly dictated much parent activity and agitation for "better schools." They also poisoned the reputation

*Space forbids discussion of the greed of individual disciplines, departments, or teachers: all would like to sequester for themselves the best students or force all students to receive their benefits. Every teacher has the feeling that his method of doing business is the keystone of the educational arch. "Wait till they've had *me*," he says. Study under Dr. Naples and die.

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of the teachers of New York with city and state governments. Unless both Mrs. Dodd's testimony and other well-informed estimates are wide of the mark, the limited Congressional and other investigations have not launched a hysterical "witch-hunt" in New York. It is the Communists who are hysterical, and with good reason: they thought they had a secure hole in the educational woodwork.

The Stalinoid liberal is probably more at home in the progressive education environment than anywhere else. He finds there the same clear-cut shibboleths (*liberal, progressive, rich, forward-looking, exciting, vital, creative,* as against *reactionary, outworn, sinister, fascist, medieval, dead*) that nourish his particular neurosis in his fantastic and bloody political cult.

But all this is far from saying that the progressive education movement is influenced by Stalinism. The Stalinists merely rode as far as they could; they never captured a significant number of big names,* and though some of the small fry would sign their papers, even the small fry were too busy promoting their educational ideas to be steadily frenetic in the cause. The brisk administrators of the educational bureaucracy are too successful and too sure of themselves to need Stalinism; and, I think, among a million teachers in America, five hundred party members outside New York and, at worst, ten thousand who do their bidding, do not represent a threat that the teachers of America cannot handle.†

With all these theoretical, vocational, and even political groupings in mind, remembering that my list of questions, in spite of its length and qualifications, represents a *simplification,* let us examine three of the latest educational manifestoes.§ Two of them, Albert Lynd's and Arthur E. Bestor's, are clearly blasts against the progressives; and significantly both writers have been or are college teachers of history, Mr. Lynd at Harvard and Professor Bestor at the University of Illinois. Mr. Lynd's book is written from the point of view of the intelligent, outraged parent, but he draws heavily from his university experience; Professor Bestor's is a formal summoning of scholars to join his army. The other book, by a teachers-college professor, is both an attack and a defense, though the defenders may consider it a stab in the back.

It is a pity that Albert Lynd's *Quackery in the Public Schools* is apparently so sensible and is so well written, for most readers will be persuaded by his plausibility or tickled by his neo-Mencken style into a belief that he is right and almost all education within the present generation (except at Harvard in the 20's and 30's) is wrong.

Mr. Lynd has two quarrels, one with the methods and curriculum of progressive education and one with the philosophy of John Dewey. Mr. Lynd and the Educationists, as he likes to call the progressives, agree that methods and curriculum depend on philosophy: any telling attack on the one weakens the other. This assumption is open to question, but it is convenient to both parties: the Educationist, who is as unsophisticated in philosophy as he is offensive in style, can take cover under Dewey's intellectual respectability; and Mr. Lynd can spend the earlier part of his book in deflating educational windbags and defying their "oceans of piffle" before devoting himself to a skillful and generally disinterested chapter on Dewey's philosophy. Ostensibly Mr. Lynd has

*Some of the biggest names in progressive education have been among the staunchest leaders of the fight against Stalinism. Dewey was among the earliest and most effective: both the granite of his character and the flexible but unalterably democratic nature of his philosophy demanded such opposition. Kilpatrick has stood consistently against the demon. And Counts, present chairman of the anti-Communist American Committee for Cultural Freedom, has not only used his extensive knowledge of Russian to inform us about Soviet schools but also, as president of the American Federation of Teachers, served as the old family vet in administering the vermifuge to the sick dog; it is true that a number of others helped hold the animal, but it was Dr. Counts who fed it the pill. The Communist-run locals were expelled, and the patient survived, thin and shaky but sound. (The worms later got into the CIO, only to achieve the martyrdom of a second expulsion.)

†I assume the 1:20 ratio as the very worst that can happen: some 50,000 party members delivered only about a million votes for Henry Wallace—before Korea.

§Albert Lynd, *Quackery in the Public Schools,* Little, Brown, 282 pp., $3.50.

Paul Woodring, *Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools,* McGraw-Hill, 215 pp., $3.50.

Arthur E. Bestor, *Educational Wastelands,* University of Illinois Press, 226 pp., $3.50.

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judged Dewey by his fruits; and—what could be fairer?—if a pragmatic tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit, it must be cut down and cast into the fire. Actually Mr. Lynd has long ago condemned the tree and uses present educational malpractice or humbug as excuse to reach for his axe and matches.

The practical half of *Quackery in the Public Schools* involves curriculum, research, and the teachers-college racket of luring students with "box-office courses" and, for those who cannot be lured, compelling attendance by degree and certification requirements and pay increments based on "in-service" and summer study. These are legitimate material for satire. Anyone with experience in schools knows that there is almost no correlation between the ability to teach and the number of education courses in one's "professional" training. Furthermore, no good teacher can get along without a thorough knowledge of his subject; the teachers colleges, however, thrive on less and less "subject matter" (a term suspect in Educationist circles) and more and more "methods." Educators live by taking in each other's washing, like the comedians of the airwaves, with even more dreary results. Their "research" pullulates like beetles; it is written in a dark, cumbrous, flat, mean prose; it smells, not even of the lamp, but of the moldy logs under which it grows and which are moved in the professional log-rolling. The Educationists, through their hold on teacher-training and their political lobbying, call the tune of state requirements* to which the teachers must dance, and the public pays the piper. The public doesn't pay enough, Mr. Lynd says: teachers' salaries must be doubled if we are to have good schools; but at present the public is being swindled.

After a brief, disdainful glance at the new curriculum, which abolishes languages, mathematics, and history in favor of projects on pets or smoke abatement, Mr. Lynd is off on his safari to bring back the pelts of Dewey and Kilpatrick. Dewey is clearly Big Game, to be approached with the respect one accords the King of Beasts; Mr. Lynd is careful in his treatment of Dewey's philosophy, to which his main objection is that it denies assumptions about the soul and God that, for better or worse, most of our citizens accept. The crushing argument against Dewey is (1) that his instrumentalism is the *only* philosophy of modern education (if you choose to accept the philosophy, you have Mr. Lynd's permission); and (2) that this instrumentalism, if understood, would never be voted into the schools by the citizens—it has been put over on us by Educationists who, if they know Dewey (and that is doubtful), know nothing else. After shooting the lion from this wary distance, Mr. Lynd then contemptuously gores and tramples the jackal, Kilpatrick, by means of quotations from Samuel Tenenbaum's book on Kilpatrick and analysis of its shoddy thought and incredible tautology. It is true that the bad prose and thinking are more Tenenbaum than Kilpatrick, but the latter says some inept things too.

No holds are barred: Kilpatrick, it is implied, was greedy for big lecture fees; he disapproved of Nicholas Murray Butler merely out of spite—as if there could be no other basis for such disapproval. Whereas Mr. Lynd is astute enough to point out at some length how Dewey's philosophy in-

*Almost every salary schedule offers more money to the teacher with graduate degrees or a specified number of hours of graduate work than to a teacher with only a bachelor's degree, so that money and time invested in graduate work are more than repaid in the long run. Since it is notoriously easier to get a degree from, say, Teachers College, Columbia, than from the graduate school of Columbia University, the teachers flock to the teachers college. This development the administrators and superintendents of schools view without alarm, for they have risen by the same gentle ladder; and since they are the "experts" who testify on educational legislation, their testimony is decisive.

None of the three books here discussed gives detailed documentation of the causes and effects of salary differentials and certification requirements. They assume what is common knowledge in the teaching profession—that one must, in order to teach, endure a certain number of "hours" in education courses. Professor Bestor, however, has some useful material on pp. 132 ff., and in his long note (pp. 222 ff.). "Pestalozzi himself," he says, "after a lifetime of teaching, could not be regularly and permanently employed by the school board of the smallest hamlet in the nation, because, forsooth, the official standards would prove him ignorant of and incompetent in pedagogy. The state zealously enforces the requirement in pedagogy. Does it show equal zeal in seeing to it that the teacher knows something about the subject he is actually assigned to teach? It does not."

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evitably demands democratic methods and abhors Stalinism (Dewey is rightly praised for having earned the epithet "red-baiter"), Kilpatrick's anti-Stalinism is suspect because "one of the circumstances that contributed to Kilpatrick's present understanding of 'how they do things' in Russia was the disappearance of his educational friends and correspondents in that country, presumably by purge." Dancing on Kilpatrick's mangled corpse, Mr. Lynd concludes by calling all parents to get in there and fight like inspired demons for higher teachers' salaries and an end to the nonsense that has almost overwhelmed the schools.

It is an emotional let-down to turn from Mr. Lynd's brisk arrogance to Professor Woodring's thoughtful and conscientious *Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools*. But Professor Woodring's book is good and Mr. Lynd's is not.

The problems of modern education, according to Professor Woodring, are many and complex, not few and simple. Though he is often a little thin in developing important ideas, he is more interested in stating a question in its complexity than in forcing an answer. He analyzes and destroys the straw-man technique of arguing used so often by Kilpatrick (and by Mr. Lynd too). The reader is likely to come away only with some preconceptions shattered, some new facts demonstrated, and some wise suggestions temperately offered.

Professor Woodring realizes, for example, that the problem of the high school curriculum is complicated by the fact that high school education has become nearly universal in the United States in the last fifty years and that some lowering of intellectual standards must necessarily have taken place. He does not rage over this development; he accepts it as something to be considered in planning a curriculum. He provides innocent merriment in his account of how one Mr. Troutstream (for Mr. Lynd's benefit, a mythical character) with the help of misguided public pressure converts a conventional high school into an academy of fly-casting and a teachers college giving fly-casting degrees. Professor Woodring blows no loud trumpet for the Three R's, but he knows that not all studies are of equal importance, and he accords primacy to those disciplines, traditional or not, necessary for living in the modern world and preserving our cultural heritage. American education is "evolving not *toward* progressive education but past it."

On Dewey's philosophy Professor Woodring would probably agree with Mr. Lynd. He does not quarrel with it except to insist that it is not the only philosophy. He is careful to point out, however, that Dewey had no sympathy for either the lunatic fringe of progressive education or those who took his theories as a license to reconstruct the social order through the schools. Professor Woodring is gentler with the teachers colleges than is Mr. Lynd, perhaps because he teaches in one, though he criticizes their overlapping courses and "vagued up" language: "To solve this dilemma by eliminating all courses in education would be to throw out the baby with the bath water. A better solution would be to simplify course offerings as much as possible, decide what is really important, eliminate the nonessential, make a real effort to avoid duplication, and rewrite the education textbooks in clear and simple English."

The chapter "What We Know About How We Can Teach" notes briefly and clearly the general consensus of educational psychology and lists in parallel columns the chief tenets of progressive education and those of Professor Woodring, who presumes to speak for the majority of teachers. I think he is right in his presumption; at any rate his beliefs seem both modern and sane. He holds that "rebuilding the social order and world order" is the business of the whole body of citizens, not of self-appointed educational policy-makers; education is learning, not growth (which Deweyan term he finds too vague to be useful); interest is essential to learning, but learning should not depend only on the immediate interests of children; "learning by doing," as commonly misunderstood, is not a sound guide for all education, which should be, especially on its higher levels, increasingly intellectual and symbolic; competition may be unfortunate, but it is universal, and our children should be trained to meet it calmly, not protected unnaturally; discipline defined as training for right conduct and effective action contributes to mental health more often than it interferes with it; inhibitions, essential to civilized

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living, can be learned without excessive frustration or neurosis.

If Professor Woodring's theory and practice are typical of teachers colleges today, it is hard to see how any sensible person not ideologically committed to extreme progressivism could object. Probably even Mr. Lynd would agree with him, though he might retort that Professor Woodring is no more representative of the Educationist bureaucracy than Lyman Bryson is representative of Teachers College, Columbia. Of course Mr. Lynd would be correct. Why then is *Quackery in the Public Schools* a bad book?

Both Professor Woodring and Mr. Lynd comment sarcastically on the fact that Dewey's philosophy, based on opposition to dogma of all sorts, has hardened into the sole dogma of Educationist training. Mr. Lynd is so committed against this dogma that he embraces almost anything else. Eclecticism is not necessarily corrupt, but eclecticism minus one, especially when so passionately asserted, is suspicious.

For example, he refers admiringly to Robert M. Hutchins, whose neo-Scholastic method of education has been reduced to its elephantine absurdity in the Syntopicon of Great Books; to Dorothy Thompson, the well-known hysterical authority; to Bernard Iddings Bell, the Philip Wylie of neo-Scholasticism; to the Harvard Report (*General Education in a Free Society*), whose rigidity of thought and "bleak anonymity of style" were so neatly pilloried by Irwin Edman (the *Nation*, September 15, 1945); and to the personal experience of Albert Lynd.

This last is embarrassing. His *obiter dicta*, buried though they sometimes are in footnotes, are presented with an authority that makes one gasp. He disposes of the Eight-Year Study of the Progressive Education Association with, "In any case, I was not impressed with the study; I found it possible to get through college easily with practically *no* formal high school training." And this from a man who puts himself forward as capable of philosophically disposing of Dewey! In a sentence he destroys his own book.

The Harvard Report recognized the tremendous problem posed by universal secondary education in America: what shall we teach the thousands of young people deemed incapable of profiting from the standard college-preparatory course? To Mr. Lynd, this is no problem at all. Let the "dullards," he says, study what they or the Educationists please; but *my* children and other intelligent children shall follow the traditional course traditionally taught. (Everywhere he shows a kindly contempt for the "slow-witted.") And what is Mr. Lynd's educational ideal? Obviously the good but limited program from which he learned much. He advocates the study of Latin through Cicero and Virgil (they are philosophically congenial to him; Horace and Lucretius get no plugs, perhaps because he doesn't like them, perhaps because traditionally they are taught only in college); he nowhere advocates the study of Greek. He approves of a modern language, mathematics, history. He is silent about science. He casts his cap for formal grammar, scorned by the same Educationists that write repetitive nonsense. But how formal grammar eliminates tautology and opacity I cannot understand, especially since Mr. Lynd, who is no philologist, never tells us *what* formal grammar he wants taught. Imaginary Latin grammar imposed on uninflected English, with cases of nouns, datives and accusatives, agreement of adjectives —none of which exist in modern English? Or English grammar taught on historical principles, out of Jespersen and even Mencken? Or does he mean rhetoric, which is not usually included in grammar? Or logic, which is not grammar?

For all Mr. Lynd's historical and philosophical knowledge and for all his polemic zest, he is naive in psychology and education. He shows no sign of being interested in the place of the fine, craft, and mechanic arts in the curriculum. He attacks educational research without being aware of the megatons of piddling research in the traditional humanities—and the quest for some author or fact or tendency so trivial or absurd as to be still virgin soil and hence arable—research that students in the 20's knew diverted the energy of teachers from teaching and during the 40's changed only to the kind of "criticism" derided by Randall Jarrell in his *Poetry and the Age*. Mr. Lynd may or may not approve of Freud. We never know: he writes as if Freud and the last fifty years of psychological investigation had never existed. Perhaps he assumes that the social and

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emotional well-being of the child is automatically achieved. If so, this is an assumption that deserves mention.

An entertaining man who ignores what does not interest him, Mr. Lynd sees education furiously and sees it in part. The blurb on his cover proclaims, "Every parent should read this book!" But though Professor Woodring lacks Mr. Lynd's gay, irresponsible vitriol, it is Professor Woodring who is really sophisticated and even wise, and it is he who more nearly deserves the blurb.

More formidable and more scholarly than either of these books, though for just those qualities it may be less influential, is Arthur E. Bestor's *Educational Wastelands*. As might be expected from his position, Professor Bestor is chiefly concerned with the allegedly dreadful state in which public school graduates arrive at our colleges and universities. They are not equipped for real scholarly acquisition; they are untrained in reading, writing, and arithmetic and hence for the vital disciplines of scientific, mathematical, historical, and philosophic thinking. The colleges must waste a year or two on work that belongs in the secondary school before they can go on to their real job. Unlike Mr. Lynd, however, Professor Bestor places the blame where it belongs: "University professors tended to turn their backs upon elementary and secondary education. They are reaping today the whirlwind which their indifference helped to sow."

Since the universities did not train teachers properly, and since the enormous expansion of the nation's educational industry demanded more and more teachers, the instructors of pedagogy stepped in. At first they did well: research in the learning process brought excellent results during the last part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th, and the instructors of pedagogy performed their essential function of mediating between the learned world and the secondary and elementary schools. But they soon sought and won first professorial and then departmental status, and finally, through the colleges of education, succeeded in establishing the "interlocking directorate of professional educationists" which by its requirements and propaganda runs the present American public school system. The prize was a big one—control of a six-billion-dollar industry with eleven billion dollars' capital worth and twenty-two million customers. Like the satraps of some other monopolistic empires, the Educationists brook no criticism, exert powerful influence over legislation, constantly extend their sway, debase their product, and increase their prices and prestige.

Most of Professor Bestor's book is devoted to an analysis of essentially anti-intellectual trends in current educational theory and practice. He provides the illustration and thought that Mr. Lynd borrows (with fulsome acknowledgment) and popularizes. But Professor Bestor can distinguish between the achievements of progressive education—improved techniques for teaching reading and other basic skills and for gaining the interest and hence furthering the intellectual curiosity of students—and what he calls regressive education, the dilution and adulteration of the curriculum that, in pursuit of the real or fancied needs of children, have only helped them to remain children perpetually. Combined with this argument and not clearly distinguished from it is an attack on both schools and colleges for fostering unabashed vocationalism in education when they should have been concerned with the chief disciplines of liberal education and the postponement of strictly vocational training as long as possible in the student's career.

In the latter part of the book Professor Bestor proposes vast reforms in teacher-training and liberal arts colleges, with concomitant reforms in the secondary schools in the direction of reestablishing basic disciplines while retaining the benefits of psychological investigation into the process of learning. These proposals are paradoxically too sweeping and too detailed for adequate treatment here. But his radical and, it seems to me, profoundly sensible discussion of teacher-training is the center of his whole argument: "We force the teacher to choose between a research program that is thorough and scholarly but too highly specialized for his needs, and a pedagogical program that is superficial and blatantly anti-intellectual and that solemnly and tediously re-instructs him in vocational skills he already possesses."

Here Professor Bestor poses the prospective teacher's dilemma neatly, and he suggests a number of concrete remedies which,

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however, entail almost equally radical reorganization of the curriculum of the liberal arts college. But it is the structure only that he would reorganize, not the original spirit or even the present content at its best. He does not recommend the panaceas of the Great Books, or of the Harvard Report (more general-education courses, mostly for ill-equipped freshmen), or of the so-called distribution requirements (one course in science, one in history, and so on) developed as a sort of cultural Tums for the tummy gorged with too many ill-assorted free electives.

He does make a few blunders in matters beyond his experience: for example, he praises that crammer's paradise, the rigid but easy Regents' Examinations. And he seems unaware of grave criticisms directed at the present College Board Examinations by both schools and colleges, who can no longer control the device they hatched. But the College Board Examinations—Procrustes' bed rather than Frankenstein's monster—are better than nothing at all. Moreover, though Professor Bestor has rightly ridiculed many aspects of the core curriculum and "integration" in the secondary school, his suggestion for an integration of the liberal arts around the study of American civilization, though hedged with fairly careful qualifications, seems like somewhat the same thing on the college level. As he himself says, ". . . the synthesis of knowledge must go on within the student."

Professor Bestor's polemic tone (his favorite phrase is, "This is absurd") leaves no doubt that he is against what is ordinarily thought of as progressive education. Yet it is unlikely that many teachers interested and well prepared in their subjects will have much to quarrel with in his book as a whole. They may perceive the essential naivety of his exaggerated respect for learned research in non-educational fields, which he contrasts with the overlapping and repetitive research in education. But all research manufactures a large number of duds for a few explosions. The difference is that in non-educational fields the duds, the Ph. D. theses, are quickly forgotten; in educational research, where the proportion is probably much the same, they are taken seriously and by some miracle of half-life, perhaps like the viruses, divide and multiply. It is the explosions that go unheard in the rain of duds.

To the thoughtful secondary school teacher Professor Bestor's defects will seem forgivable, for he is earnestly bent on achieving the same goal as theirs. Furthermore, unlike Mr. Lynd, who is determined that the old things be done in the old ways, he does not care how the job is done if it is done well. He knows that new ways are often better, as long as they remain means and not ends.

MEANWHILE the steady roar of the Three R's has been continuing. I should now like to add my contribution. To the best of my knowledge there has been no convincing study showing either serious decline or gratifying gain in the acquisition of basic skills by most of our children. They read less, though I am not sure we can blame the schools. Dime novels were better than comics or television in one way: they had to be read to be enjoyed. But the schools did not create comics or television. I do know that every allegation about the Three R's is accompanied and perhaps motivated by special interest or ideological passion. Nevertheless the contention that the Three R's are dead is reiterated by the attackers and is denied by the defenders, who say (and which side of the street are they working?) that not only do we not bother with the Three R's (an outworn, sterile goal) but the result justifies our neglect, since it has been proved that under progressivism the children learn the Three R's better than ever.

I am as dubious of the validity of the charge as I am suspicious of the illogic of the reply. Is English orthography a genuine criterion of cultural blamelessness? My use of Veblenese is deliberate, since in the closing pages of *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (written before Dewey came to Columbia) is a passage on spelling that ought to finish this topic forever. English spelling is a curse; we must simply do our best to cope with it. We have never achieved and shall never achieve anything like perfection. Keats could not spell; Milton was a precise speller, in one instance revising *me* to *mee*.

Punctuation is to my mind a better trick to learn, since it demands some intelligence (spelling has almost no correlation with intelligence) and is a legitimate segment of the art of writing. But when businessmen complain they cannot find a stenographer who can punctuate, I know they must be psychic. Otherwise, how would they know?

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About mathematics I do not dare to speak; I was trained in old-fashioned schools. But on the general art of writing I suggest consulting Mr. Barzun's article in the December *Atlantic* for joyous illustration of the inability—not of children—to feel anything but contempt for words. And I should like to add my mite, an example of luminous prose written by a trained engineer, in the descriptive instructions accompanying a hot-water valve: "This is the fastest operating expansion type air vent having the largest water and air passages yet produced."

Obviously we must go on teaching the Three R's as well as we know how. But since methods of doing so have changed in the remote and near past, they may well do so again, and possibly for the better.

IF THE steady roar of the educational battle is to be discounted, how then shall we answer all the other crucial questions that I asked earlier? I do not propose answers, but I should like to make a few suggestions, the first of which has to do with the curriculum.

The problem of the curriculum is the state of the world. Not all vital knowledge can possibly be included in even a sixteen-year course of study. What is most vital? History, science, literature and the arts, philosophy, mathematics, foreign languages. But in what order of emphasis? And what do we select, and for whom? For example, all languages are important nowadays: Persian and Korean yesterday, perhaps Finnish tomorrow, Chinese and Russian today. I think the problem of selection will be—not solved, for that is impossible—dealt with best by those who are committed neither to the traditionalists nor to the progressives; though a good case might be made for a fairly traditional curriculum taught by progressive methods, I think it better that the traditional curriculum should be expanded if it can be expanded without dilution. This expansion, however, should always be supervised by scholars and teachers, not by "curriculum experts." Both scholars and teachers have vested interests; the curriculum experts not only have vested interests but are usually neither scholars nor teachers.

Second, if teaching is a compound of science and art—mostly art—we had better get some artists. Suppose, unlikely as it sounds, Broadway were infested with excellent plays badly acted. If producers were as irrational as educational policy-makers and the public, they would then establish schools for playwrights. But not being so foolish, they would instead offer high prices for good actors, go out and find them, and, even though the hams were all on tenure, gradually replace them with the actors. The matter of teachers' salaries is not purely academic: offer teachers real money for teaching, not for research or administration, and you will eventually get good schools.

Third, pragmatism is a peculiarly American philosophy; it is hardly surprising that John Dewey, who may be loosely termed a pragmatist over his own protest, proved so attractive to American teachers, who had in any case to operate in secular schools. It is a pity that educators know only one philosopher, and they should learn more. They could have done worse: it would be more alarming, to me at least, if they knew only Maritain or Santayana or Mortimer Adler.

AS A sort of over-all guide to reasoning on the problems of education, I shall quote three passages written over forty years ago by a middle-of-the-road teacher, interested in reform but familiar with the great heritage of the past:

> A few generations ago the great obstacle in the way of reform of primary education was belief in the almost magical efficacy of the symbols of language (including number) to produce mental training; at present, belief in the efficacy of objects just as objects, blocks the way. As frequently happens, the better is an enemy of the best.
>
> The outcome, the *abstract* to which education is to proceed, is an interest in intellectual matters for their own sake, a delight in thinking for the sake of thinking.
>
> The aim of education should be to secure a balanced interaction of the two types of mental attitude [the practical and the theoretical], having sufficient regard to the disposition of the individual not to hamper and cripple whatever powers are naturally strong in him. The narrowness of individuals of strong concrete bent needs to be liberalized. Every opportunity that occurs within their practical activities for developing curiosity and susceptibility to intellectual problems should be seized. Violence is not done to the natural disposition, but the latter is broadened. As regards the smaller number of those who have a

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taste for abstract, purely intellectual topics, pains should be taken to multiply opportunities and demands for the application of ideas; for transforming symbolic truths into terms of social life and its ends. Every human being has both capabilities, and every individual will be more effective and happier if both powers are developed in easy and close interaction with each other.

If I may venture a comment on these sentences, which seem to me both wise and useful as a frame of reference for solving practical problems, it would go like this: It is easy to prepare a child to be a child. It is less easy, but possible, to prepare a child to be a man. But it is extremely difficult to prepare a child to be a man—not only a wage-earner but a participant in the cultural heritage of humanity and in the civic obligations of his society—while still allowing him to enjoy his childhood. The first is done, and pretty well, by the progressives. The second was and is done, with less general success but with conspicuous success for certain bright or docile children, by the traditionalists. The third remains to be done on any significantly large scale. I do not see how we can do it if the factions in the great educational battle continue to pay more attention to their war cries than to their jobs.

Our writer cautions us against trust in magic, and it seems to me that both traditionalists and progressives believe in the magical efficacy of a particular method or curriculum, *ex opere operato,* to perform unprecedented tasks without real thought. We should begin once again to think more of substance than of method. For, as has been amply demonstrated in recent years, that way, the way of method, the present madness lies, the madness of the educational partisans, of the warring schools and schoolmen—on both sides.

Putting aside trust in magic, therefore, we shall need to take thought. We shall of course need to read and consider such books as I have been discussing, regarding their war cries as ominous but not altogether decisive. We should read the best teachers of the past, as well as their noisier followers among the traditionalists today. We should also read John Dewey, as well as the less profound, less literate, and more sentimental progressives who claim to be his followers. I suspect, since he is the writer of the passages I quoted, that he still has much to teach us in our efforts to bring about the kind of education that he and we would desire. Maybe it would be useful to turn back and reread them, as well as similar passages in his writings, and take them to heart.

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WILL THE IRAQIS FIGHT FOR THE WEST?

From the Bagdad Slum, It Looks Dubious

RAY ALAN

BAGDAD

BAGDAD has a strangely insubstantial air. In color everything is a muddy brown—the flimsy buildings, the turbulent Tigris, the clothes of the people—and the general effect is of a half-completed film set in a studio whose painters are on strike. The main trouble is lack of stone. Buildings are put up with only rudimentary—or, in the poorest quarters, no—foundations; walls are made of mud or flattened-out gasoline cans; the few asphalted main streets ripple and undulate like tablecloths at a picnic; and the squalid alleys in which nine-tenths of the capital's inhabitants live are surfaced only with caked earth, garbage, and dung. The glamorous, glittering metropolis of the Abbasid caliphs might well have been on another planet. It only needs, one feels, a dust storm or flood a notch above average (and this is the land not only of floods but of the Flood) for the whole city to vanish overnight.

The same feeling extends to politics. An affable sheikh I met on the desert bus from Damascus turned out to be a member of Parliament with a bitterly anti-British record. A friendly taxi driver who refused to accept payment for a run he considered too short to be worth bothering about was recently, I learned afterwards, a leading member of a mob engaged in stoning Europeans and burning their property. A neat new Anglo-Iraqi treaty, signed at Portsmouth on January 15, 1948 and described by the late Ernest Bevin as the keystone of a projected arch of Middle Eastern alliances, crumbled to sand under the first stress a few days later. The closer one's scrutiny, the stronger one's impression that Iraq's whole political edifice, from foundation to summit, is as shoddy and as unsteady as a Bagdad slum.

AT THE apex of Iraqi affairs balances the Hashemite monarchy. Until the 1919-20 peace settlement placed the territory under British mandate, Mesopotamia had for four centuries been part of the Ottoman Empire. That the future state of Iraq should be a monarchy was decided by a conference of British officials called by Winston Churchill, then Colonial Secretary, in Cairo in 1921. The previous year had seen a costly revolt in the tribal areas of the lower and middle Euphrates—a major source of dissatisfaction being the efficiency of the British tax gatherers who collected more than three times as much revenue as their Turkish predecessors—and it was felt that no less impressive an initiative would suffice to give the new country a sense of unity, soothe nationalist sentiment, and dam currents of opinion that were flowing towards Kemalist Turkey and Bolshevik Russia.

The Cairo conference served both Britain and Iraq well by recommending for the kingship T. E. Lawrence's ally, the Emir Feisal, an Arab warrior-statesman of heroic

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WHAT was once the Garden of Eden has now run dreadfully to seed; Iraq, though it possesses a wealth of cultivable land and an abundant water supply, supports half the population it had a thousand years ago. The incubus weighing upon the country, RAY ALAN writes, is landlordism and corruption. At the moment Great Britain is throwing its support to the landlord clique, and the sending of American arms to Iraq is being seriously proposed. According to Mr. Alan, a potentially dangerous situation is developing in which reform and modern innovation are becoming associated with the Soviet East, and the ruling group is being strengthened—for what? Mr. Alan, a British journalist specializing in the Near East, contributed "Ramadan Sundown with Modern Improvements" to the May 1953 COMMENTARY.

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stature whom the French had the previous year expelled from Syria.* (At the same conference it was decided to buy Feisal's less impressive brother Abdullah off from a half-hearted attack on the French by offering him an Emirate of his own in Transjordan. The Hashemites would thus have become the dominant dynastic bloc in the Arab world had not the Emirs' father, the Sherif Hussein of Mecca, been ousted shortly afterwards from his ancestral Hejaz by the late Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud who went on to found the anti-Hashemite kingdom of Saudi Arabia.) The Iraqis' acceptance of Feisal was markedly unenthusiastic—indeed, they showed little appreciation of his outstanding qualities until after his death—but the British mandatory administration, deeming the momentousness of the occasion to justify the use of somewhat un-British methods, succeeded in obtaining a plebiscite result in his favor of 96 per cent. There followed a decade of friendly collaboration between the King and successive British High Commissioners which culminated in the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1930, whereby, two years later, Iraq achieved independence and Britain secured important strategic and political privileges.

King Feisal's English-educated son Ghazi, who succeeded his father in 1933 at the age of twenty-one, went out of his way to play to the nationalist gallery. He expressed approval of his army's barbarous massacre of the pro-British Assyrian Christians, conferring the title Pasha on the prime organizer of the outrage, General Bakr Sidqi. He laid claim to the British protectorate of Kuwait, denounced British sponsorship of Zionism in Palestine, and maintained unhealthily close relations with anti-British politicians and army officers. An indisputably Anglophile Providence involved him in a fatal automobile accident three weeks after Hitler's invasion of Czechoslovakia, just in time to prevent him from inflicting any lasting damage on Britain's sufficiently unsteady defensive arrangements in the Near East. Nationalist elements inevitably took it for granted that the British Foreign Office had nudged Providence's elbow and the British Consul at Mosul was murdered in reprisal.

On May 2 last year Ghazi's eighteen-year-old son was enthroned in the Iraqi capital as Feisal II. The interregnum had been filled by the boy's uncle, the safely pro-British and unpopular Emir Abdul-Illah, acting as Regent. Nationalist hotheads, whose numbers have swollen since even King Ghazi's heyday, are now proclaiming their confidence that the young monarch will lead on from where his father left off and initiate a break with Britain and a united Arab onslaught on Israel; in private, however, they admit misgivings as to the effects of his prolonged English education.

The British Embassy, too, has high hopes of Feisal II; but its more realistic officials are far from sanguine. Even if Feisal suppresses the—at his age, and in present circumstances—almost overpowering temptation to seek popularity cheaply, he may feel that filial loyalty obliges him to follow in the footsteps of his father, of whom he has a dangerously idealized mental picture. He is conscious, moreover, that a great deal is expected of him by the nationalists; and he knows that if he is to fulfill their hopes, and secure the Hashemite dynasty more firmly in his people's affections than it has been during the last decade, his father's flamboyant methods are more likely to win acclaim than the patient "collaborationist" statesmanship of Feisal I. Another factor influencing his outlook in this sphere would be the element of youthful rivalry animating his relation with his second cousin Hussein of Jordan, enthroned the same day in Amman. Finally, British officials cannot refrain from reflecting on the disquieting coincidence that those other young Arab rulers who received what

*Two years before the Cairo conference he had made the famous Feisal-Weizmann agreement with the future president of Israel and had written to Felix Frankfurter: "We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. . . . We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home. . . . We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East and our two movements complete one another. . . . Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other."

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Whitehall prescribes as the ideal English education for an Oriental prince—Ghazi, Farouk, and Talal—all reacted most unfavorably in later years. Waterloo may indeed have been won on the playing fields at Eton; but a distressing amount of the Middle East seems to have been lost on the hill at Harrow.

IRAQI independence came of age last October. In the twenty-one years that have elapsed since the termination of the British mandate, Iraq has had thirty-five changes of government, seven of them by military *coup d'état*. But none of the changes has ever upset the plutocratic character of the regime or liberalized it more than temporarily. Authority remains concentrated within the same charmed circle of landowning city notables and feudal sheikhs that has dominated Iraqi affairs since the departure of the Turks. From time to time individuals within the circle have incited tribes to revolt and troops to mutiny, and have intrigued with the Palace, the General Staff, and representatives of foreign states—the Iraqi air force has even been used to bomb Bagdad—in order to advance their personal interests and raise themselves a rung or two up the ladder of power; but electoral fraud, press censorship, and, in the last resort, police and military measures have so far been successful in keeping at bay the vociferous, frustrated middle class of lawyers, journalists, clerks, merchants' sons, junior army officers, and officials, inclined increasingly to the political left, that has emerged during the last two decades.

Doyen of the Iraqi oligarchy is Ottoman-trained Nuri Pasha es-Said, eleven times Prime Minister and on numerous occasions Foreign Minister, Defense Minister, and Chairman of the Senate. Nuri Pasha alone has consistently, over the years, maintained the first Feisal's policy of collaboration with Britain, manipulating elections and nationalist sentiment alike with a sustained brilliance rare in the mercurial Middle East and, nowadays, unique in his devotion to the unpopular cause of friendship with an imperial power. With the exception of the late King Abdullah of Jordan, Britain has had no more reliable friend in the modern Arab world; yet time may show that few men of his caliber have done Britain more long-term harm. Nuri's unconcealed contempt for such sacred cows as democracy and social justice, to which most Arab politicians at least pay lip service, have scared away from Britain (for every Arab regards him as a British agent) the rising reformist elements, passionately radical and iconoclastic, which Britain and other Western nations will one day have to come to terms with if the Near East is not to go the way of China.

Nuri Pasha is outstanding among Arab leaders for his candor. He has told the West quite bluntly, for instance, that Bagdadi public opinion would not favor Iraqi membership in a Near East defense organization associated with the NATO powers. (In Damascus dictator Adib Shishakli knows the same is true of Syrian opinion but has no scruples against keeping Western hopes alive for as long as British aircraft and American tanks are forthcoming.) He makes no pretense that Iraqi elections are free. In an interview with an Egyptian newspaper early in 1946 he declared without embarrassment that in "arranging" elections to the Chamber of Deputies seats are allocated first to "all former prime ministers, [then] to all ministers who have been in office more than twice, eminent ex-officials receiving government pensions, tribal sheikhs, and so on." These nominees, he went on, "fill about 60 per cent of the Chamber; allocation of the remainder depends for the most part on the wishes of the government in power, though such private individuals as desire may put themselves forward for consideration." For the Iraqi Senate there is not even this much of an election: all senators are nominated by the Palace.

Demands for electoral reform were the mainspring of the destructive riots at Bagdad and Kerbela in November 1952, and the election which followed, in January, was conducted under a revised procedure which camouflaged the managing of the results

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to a slight extent. The notorious "secondary electors" who were the kingpins of the old "indirect" system of voting reappeared as members of the electoral committees which registered votes on behalf of the 90 per cent of the electorate that is illiterate. (One of their duties was to make the appropriate adjustment where ballot boxes were found to contain more votes than there had been voters!) But to avoid any slip between cup and lip all anti-government political leaders and their chief supporters were arrested and all anti-government newspapers and meetings were suppressed.*

POLITICAL parties have been banned for most of Iraq's twenty-one years of independence. Those that had sprung into being under the British administration were abolished, in the name of "national unity," when the mandate came to an end. Over a dozen parties mushroomed into existence in 1946, when their formation was at last sanctioned (though only in Bagdad), but the Palestine war soon gave the authorities another occasion to impose unrelieved authoritarianism in the "national" cause.

From 1949 to the end of 1952 restrictions were again relaxed and five parties were formed, one by Nuri es-Said and four by opposition elements. Two of these—the National Democratic and Independence parties—represent, for the first time in Iraqi politics, the crystallization of a constant trend of opinion. In their ranks are being shaped the Iraqi leaders of tomorrow.

The National Democratic party (hesb el-Watani ed-Dimuqrati) professes something like an ideological approach to politics on British socialist lines. Its leaders are a millionaire landowner, Kamil el-Chadirchi, and a wealthy Mosul notable named Mohamed Hadib, presently in voluntary exile in England. All the most prominent members of this party received an English or American education but their outlook has in recent years become strongly anti-Western. The British and United States embassies in Bagdad return the compliment, denouncing them as pro-Russian. They are undoubtedly "neutralist," and when the Korean war broke out their paper *Sada el-Ahali* put the blame on "American aggression"; but this is a consequence more of disillusionment with Britain than of infatuation with Russia. The National Democratic leaders rashly led their followers to expect great things of the British Labor government and are still reeling from the shock they suffered when Mr. Attlee's cabinet made clear its intention of maintaining the Foreign Office's traditional support for the feudal oligarchies of the Arab world. The late Ernest Bevin and his advisers not merely cold-shouldered groups like el-Chadirchi's, which a more enlightened policy could have saved from Moscow's embrace, but actually encouraged the Arab governments to take active measures against them. It is hardly surprising that the dismayed reformists reacted with a leftward jerk.

The ultra-nationalist Independence party —Istiqlal—is outstanding even by Arab standards for its virulent xenophobia. It is scurrilously anti-Western, anti-Christian, anti-Jewish, and anti-Turkish, and finds time also for sly denigration of the Hashemite monarchy. It urges a "second round" in Israel (and, unlike most Arab parties that talk in this idiom, really wants one), creation of an Iraqi-dominated Syrian-Iraqi-Jordanian union, and "armed neutrality" in the cold war. An official of the party asked its acting president, Mohamed Mahdi Kubba, on my behalf to define this phrase. Kubba replied that provided the democracies satisfied Iraq's "minimum national demands"—which he modestly defined as including abrogation of

*On this election the London *Times* commented editorially that its "two most notable features" were "the orderly atmosphere in which it was conducted"—a euphemism for martial law—"and the size of the majority given to the followers of Nuri es-Said." The Iraqi Foreign Minister's delighted aside on reading this was: "It would have been even more notable had the majority been a small one!" The comment is typical of the sort of pious nonsense—dutifully injected into the columns of papers such as the *Times* and the *Economist*, which are believed in the Arab capitals to echo Whitehall's official opinion, and maliciously embellished by the Arabic press—that has done so much to blacken Britain's reputation in Near Eastern eyes in recent years.

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the 1930 Anglo-Iraqi treaty, liquidation of British bases, and nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company*—Iraqis "would not be hostile" to the West, though they would resist any attempt to use their country for military purposes. He added that Iraq's attitude towards the transit of Russian forces across her territory would, of necessity, be "non-defensive." (One of his collaborators said that provided the Russians were on their way to outflank Turkey and not attack an Arab state "our good wishes would go with them.") Istiqlal is better organized than most Arab parties and maintains close contacts with similar "right-wing" and "Islamic-socialist" groups in Egypt, Syria, and North Africa. Some of its foreign links pass through the hands of Haj Amin el-Husseini, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, and the Arab League's office for "North African liberation" in Cairo. It is also in touch with the Saudi court through its exiled honorary president, Rashid Ali el-Gailani, organizer of the pro-Nazi military coup of 1941.

The National Democratic and Independence parties were, when legal, the strongest political organizations in Iraq. The latter was in the lead numerically, claiming around ten thousand adherents, and more popular in the army than its rival, but the intellectual superiority of el-Chadirchi's following, of some importance in a largely illiterate country, helped restore the balance.

IN COMMON with all other political movements in Iraq, Communism has enjoyed only brief periods of legality. The Iraqi Communist leadership has, moreover, suffered frequent schisms through disagreement over personal and tactical issues. If one bears in mind also such natural organizational obstacles as the size of the country, poor communications, mass illiteracy, and the formidable racial, religious, and social chasms which divide Arab from Kurd, Shiite from Sunni, and discontented peasantry from proselytizing middle-class "intelligentsia," the Bagdad Criminal Investigation Department's maximum figure of forty to forty-five thousand Communists in the whole of Iraq does not appear to be an underestimate; and even of this number—under 1 per cent of the population, compared with about 8 per cent in more compact, more literate Lebanon—considerably less than a quarter are thought to be convinced Marxists.

Communism is, however, gaining ground in Iraq—and unless substantial social and political reforms are realized, will accelerate its rate of advance as educational facilities spread and communications improve. As in most Arab countries the privileged classes are among the Communists' best allies. One of the most effective ways of interesting any budding reformer in Communism—whether his pet panacea is trade-union rights or piped sewage disposal—is to call him a Communist, bang him on the head, and fling him into an internment camp. *Liwa el-Istiqlal*, organ of the Independence party, has said of this Near Eastern custom:

"As is well known, numerous young men are [periodically] arrested as 'Communists.' In fact, when taken into custody, they are nothing of the sort. But as a result of this experience, and of ill-treatment at the hands of the police, they leave prison convinced Communists, 100 per cent."

On occasion, an equally disastrous subtlety has been manifested in Bagdad. Whenever Russian interest or influence in the Near East has seemed to be in the ascendant (as during the Azerbaijani scare in Persia) the Iraqi government—fearing, perhaps, an outbreak of popular unrest which Moscow might be able to exploit—has nervously promised reforms and adopted a more tolerant attitude. The moment the crisis has passed, reforms and liberalization have been shelved. Had Nuri Pasha and his colleagues wished to condition the Iraqi public to associate Russia with reform they could scarcely have done more.

On the morrow of Hitler's war the Iraqi Communists founded two "front" organi-

*The I.P.C. is British-managed but owned jointly by British, Anglo-Dutch, French, and American groups (23¾ per cent each) and a British-naturalized Armenian, Mr. C. S. Gulbenkian (5 per cent)—a real-life Arabian Nights hero.

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zations—the semi-underground National Liberation party and the wholly legal Anti-Zionist League which was allowed to run its own daily paper. These were succeeded in 1948 by the Peace Partisans' movement. Both the National Democratic and Independence parties—more particularly the latter—have undergone a certain amount of Communist penetration, and the Communists seem content, now, to merge their identity with those of opposition groups of this type. Some resident Western observers are of the opinion that the underground Communist organization is not very effective. "The point is," an English resident of Bagdad told me, "that the Communists here are just as inefficient as all the other Iraqis." Nevertheless, it seems likely that demand will ultimately create supply—and demand there certainly is in every part of Iraq.

THE four million Iraqis dependent on agriculture (80 per cent of the population) are for the most part indebted serf-tenants worse off, even, than the Syrian fellahin.* For all agriculture south of the Kirkuk-Haditha pipeline—just over two-thirds of the total—is dependent on irrigation, and whereas the average Syrian peasant has to carry on his back only his admittedly rapacious landlord, most Iraqis must labor under the burden of water-rights owner, pump owner, and *sarkal* (sub-sheikh) as well. In flow-irrigated areas (where no pumps are used) peasants retain an average of one-fifth of their crops for themselves and their families; in pump-irrigated districts their share may be only one-tenth or less. It is, therefore, with something like Luddite horror that the farmers of the "primitive" rain-fed north, who manage to keep half their crops, are greeting the extension of irrigation projects and pump installations to their region. "Development," however many complacent liberal hearts it may set aglow in the West, can all too easily deteriorate into just another means of enriching the landlords and enslaving the people it is supposed to uplift unless accompanied by basic reforms in the realms of land tenure and water rights. To put the problem at its simplest: the more the value of privately owned land is increased as a result of development, the higher the rent its owner is justified in asking.

The burden of these depredations is in no way lightened by the awakening peasants' knowledge that the authority whereby they are exploited is usurped. When Iraq attained independence, nearly five-sixths of all her cultivated land was either state domain or collective tribal property. Were this still so, development would present few problems. In the intervening years, however, most of this priceless asset has been parceled out among the ruling-class families and their political supporters; and the sheikhs, taking advantage of the ignorance of their illiterate tribesmen, have been allowed, in return for political services, to register tribal land in their own names and assume landlord status—with their tribesmen as rent-paying tenants. One of Nuri es-Said's last acts as Prime Minister in 1952, in preparation for the approaching election, was to transfer tracts of state domain in the Amara district to local sheikhs as the price of their tribal votes.

Of a typical Amara sheikh an unpublished British official report, prepared for the wartime Middle East Supply Center, has this to say: "He is . . . too big a man to be a farmer and too indolent, corrupt, and uneducated to make of himself anything else. As regards agricultural activity, the sheikh is completely unimportant; he takes little interest in seed or ground preparation and is more ignorant than his farmers about such matters."

Men like this—avaricious speculators with not a grain of national or social conscience—now dominate more than two-thirds of the Iraqi countryside and are able to hold not merely agriculture but the whole national economy to ransom: they control both parliament and the entire rural administration and cannot even be obliged to bear an appropriate fiscal load; and there is no prospect, in the foreseeable future, of their strangle-

*See the present writer's "Palace Politics in the Damascus Oasis" in COMMENTARY, February 1953.

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hold being broken—by constitutional means.

Iraq has five times as much cultivable land as Egypt, with a population only a quarter as big, and two great rivers nourished by the abundant snows of Anatolia and Kurdistan. During the four centuries before Mohammed, under the Persian Sasanids, the country supported more than twice its present number of inhabitants. It could do so again. The Directorate of Irrigation in Bagdad estimates that existing supplies of water are ample for an immediate 30 per cent expansion of the area under cultivation; and on completion of combined flood control and water-storage works now under way an increase of 350 per cent will be attainable.

Yet of the nominally cultivated land for which water supplies are already adequate, less than half is cropped annually: this is due partly to underpopulation in some areas and inefficiency in all—but mainly to the system of landownership and tenure which robs the peasant of all incentive to expand the scope of his activities, improve his methods, and increase his output. Human greed, corruption, and irresponsibility have turned the site of the Garden of Eden into a wilderness of squalor and exploitation comparable to Egypt and China. The cultivator whose annual income, in cash and kind, exceeds $80 is doing well: for the majority the figure is under $70. Intestinal and venereal diseases, trachoma, and malaria are the rule rather than the exception. Five infants out of ten die before they reach the age of five. On balance, the average Iraqi peasant is worse off today than was his grandfather under the Turks.

THESE conditions could, undoubtedly, be improved by intelligent use of Iraq's huge oil earnings. The Iraqi Treasury will collect from the I.P.C. this year some 130 million dollars in royalties, taxes, and shared profits, and by 1956 Iraq's income from oil—since production is expanding—will be approximately 170 million dollars annually.

In 1950 it was announced that 70 per cent of the country's oil earnings would, in future, be devoted to "development and education," and a Central Development Board was set up. On British advice the Board was to be non-political and non-ministerial, so as to lessen the chances of its falling under the influence of private interests; but this aim has been only imperfectly realized and the Board has become the center of violent controversy. It is variously accused of lining the pockets of the big landowners, sheikhs, and government politicians, and favoring them in its choice of projects; of inefficiency resulting from nepotic over-staffing; of creating a new privileged class of its own officials; and of siphoning off development funds for military and police purposes (e.g., the purchase of jet aircraft and the construction of barracks). Not all these charges are sustainable; but they have aroused so much ill-feeling towards the Board in Bagdad that the government has been forced to take action. Last May the Board was given a new chairman (Sayed Dhia ed-Din Jafar) and the public was promised a fresh start.

The Board's major achievement to date has been its completion of the pre-war Lake Habbaniya project (started under the Ottoman regime!) for the diversion of Euphrates flood water and its storage for summer use. It has also built an unspecified number of schools and houses—the latter mainly for its officials—and has expanded Iraq's hopelessly inadequate road network.

Another flood-control scheme, linking the Tigris (which regularly inundates Bagdad) with the Wadi Tharthar depression northwest of the capital, is under way, having been primed with a loan of $12,800,000 from the Washington World Bank in 1950.

At Hilla and Mussaiyib, just over fifty miles south of Bagdad, fifteen-hundred-year-old irrigation canals are to be brought back into use and extended. Dams are to be built on three tributaries of the Tigris—the Greater Zab, the Lesser Zab, and the Diyala—and a new Euphrates barrage is contemplated. Drainage and road-building are to be carried out in the areas these irrigation projects will open to more intensive settlement. Two state-owned oil refineries are to be built, at Bagdad and near Basra.

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Few of these projects will, however, bring substantial benefits to the average Iraqi peasant without a drastic overhaul of the country's rural social structure and its system of landlordism and tenancy and of the ownership of water rights, pumps, and irrigation canals.

TWENTY-ONE years of independence have registered important gains for Iraq's three-million-strong Shiite community.* Iraq has always been the center of the Shiite cosmos, in which the shrines of the Imam Ali at Nejf and his son Hussein at Kerbela are no less sacred than the Kaba at Mecca. Annual pilgrimages to these holy cities bring together Shiites from all over the Islamic world, and are of some significance also as occasions for the dissemination of venereal disease—on arrival at the shrines pilgrims are permitted to contract a form of temporary marriage (*mita*), with local ladies freely available for the purpose, which is dissolved when they leave—and of anti-Western propaganda, in the fabrication of which the influential local *Mujtahids* (Shiite divines) and the followers of the Mullah Kashani, who lead the important Persian contingents, seem to vie with one another. Camels and donkeys plod into Nejf all the year round bringing the corpses of pious Shiites for burial there.

The Shiites outnumber the orthodox Sunni Moslems in Iraq by about 40 per cent; and the Sunni minority is split into mutually mistrustful Arabs and Kurds, with the latter predominating slightly. The new Iraqi state was, nevertheless, under Sunni Arab domination from the start. The chief notables and landowners of Ottoman Mesopotamia had been Sunnis; and the Turks, of the same persuasion, had favored them, disliking the Shiites even more than they disliked the Mesopotamian Arabs as a whole. The Shiites had, moreover, throughout Islamic history, been anti-aristocratic, anti-feudal malcontents and insurgents, mistrusted by Arab and Turk alike.

When independence came, the Shiite sheikhs won themselves a niche among the favored few—chiefly by threatening tribal revolts—and acquired large tracts of land. In the capital, where they were in a majority, the Shiites benefited most from the economic activity Bagdad's new status provoked, and the new middle class sprang mainly from their ranks. After the Palestine war Shiite interests acquired most of the businesses left behind by Jews emigrating to Israel. Today, many ambitious Shiites, in search of a short-cut to that political supremacy which they feel their community is entitled to, tend increasingly to campaign against the still largely Sunni ruling class and royal family on religious grounds.

That so many Shiites are anti-British is due to Britain's past association, and apparent mutual dependence pact, with these unpopular Sunni elements. After the Second World War the British embassy in Bagdad attempted to combine the tasks of wooing the Shiites and finding a dependable successor to the aging Nuri es-Said by grooming Saleh Jabr, a prominent Shiite notable, as *homme de confiance*. After the usual cooked elections he became Iraq's first Shiite Prime Minister in March 1947. (Nuri, to help keep an eye on things, was appointed Chairman of the Senate.) Saleh's enthusiasm for his new role soon ebbed. In January 1948, seduced (he now says) by promises of a glorious walkover for the Iraqi army in Palestine, he signed Bevin's abortive Portsmouth treaty—and was obliged to take refuge from his enraged compatriots and co-religionists in a remote tribal area.

IT WAS fear that another attempt to put across a Portsmouth-type treaty would follow the winter election that largely underlay the opposition parties' violent insistence on electoral reform in the fall of 1952. The election did produce an unmistakably Nuri-minded government; but the memory of the anti-Western riots in which the opposition's campaign culminated is still sufficiently vivid to deter treaty-making tendencies on both sides for some time.

*For a brief account of the origins and beliefs of the Shiites see COMMENTARY for June 1952.

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In any event, the whole problem of superseding the 1930 treaty, before it expires, by an alternative arrangement which might reconcile Iraqi susceptibilities with Britain's strategic needs has become rather academic. No durable strategic formula, acceptable to Iraqi opinion and of real value to Western planners, is likely to emerge from purely bilateral Anglo-Iraqi consultations. A combined Anglo-French-Turkish-American approach might yield results, provided Britain were willing to evacuate her treaty air bases at Habbaniya (near Bagdad) and Shaiba (near Basra), though the word "results" in this kind of context, in the Arab world, rarely means more than an exchange of face-saving platitudes, so turned as to induce a maximum of complacency in public opinion and win a maximum of credit for the diplomats concerned, but quite devoid of any practical significance. No Iraqi government would be likely to concede the Western allies even as much as they would be forced to take for themselves in the event of war; and the essential thing is for the West to have adequately equipped mobile forces within reach to do the taking.*

BRITAIN, fortunately, still has troops and planes in Jordan, though even there, despite the financial palliative, anti-treaty sentiment is making itself felt. The nearest Russian forces are about the same distance away, half an hour's flying time from Iraq's northern frontier. In between lies the Iraqi army, some 30,000 strong, consisting of one "combat" division in the north, permanently pinned down keeping an eye on the Kurds; a second "combat" division and a little armor in the central plains, on call for tribal uprisings and trouble in Bagdad; and a training division whose units are scattered throughout the country. The basic aim of the organization, equipment, and training of the Iraqi army is to enable it, in the words of Feisal I, "to crush any two armed revolts which might break out simultaneously in different parts of the country." Anything more complicated than that is likely to fall outside its scope, and in the "holy war" on Britain in 1941 it was defeated fairly comfortably by a hastily gathered scratch force of British depot troops and Jordanian Legionnaires.

Since then the Iraqi army has received spasmodic training by harassed British military missions, and now the United States is reported to be considering re-equipping it. Recently I asked one of the three or four Britons best qualified to answer whether he considered the Iraqis morally and materially capable of carrying out a modest holding action against the Russians so as to give Western forces time to move in. My opinion was, admittedly, unrealistic since it assumed that the Iraqi government of the day would be not merely pro-Western but strong enough to keep the mob in its place even in the army's absence—a utopian premise. He replied: "Should you, by chance, be anywhere near Rutba [a desert outpost on the road to Syria] on the day the Russians cross the Caucasus you will observe, towards nightfall, a small puff of dust rapidly crossing the desert from east to west. That will be me. Linger awhile, for within half an hour or so you will see a much larger and more spectacular dust cloud speeding in the same direction. That will be the Iraqi army."

*Iraq's attitude to Israel remains basically unchanged. Anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli speeches and newspaper editorials are still the order of the day and Iraqi public opinion is constantly reminded that Iraq alone, of the main Arab participants in the invasion of Israel, has not concluded an armistice with the "Zionist bands" and is therefore free to march again whenever she wishes. King Feisal, in his speech from the throne to the Iraq Parliament last December, called upon the Arab states to "stand up to the Israeli danger." As I have indicated, however, Istiqlal is the only party that gives the impression of meaning what it says in this respect; for the others, a standard denunciation of Israel is as much a matter of convention as the routine invocation of God's blessing on one's hearers contained in all speeches and radio announcements, and is delivered with about as much sincerity.

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RAV KUK'S PATH TO PEACE WITHIN ISRAEL

"Ascend to the Roots . . . ."

HERBERT WEINER

"SON of man," wrote Abraham Isaac Kuk in one of his rhapsodic bursts of prose, "let not names, words, phrases, and letters swallow your soul. They are in your power, and you are not in theirs. Lift upwards, rise! Fierce power is yours. You have wings of spirit, the wings of mighty eagles. . . ." But Rabbi Kuk was Chief Rabbi of Palestine from 1921 to his death in 1935, and so spent much of his life preoccupied with words, phrases, and letters, and more than that with the smallest minutiae of ritual law.

There were other paradoxes. Rabbi Kuk was raised in the ascetic world of the great Yeshivas of Russia and Lithuania. But continually he preached to his own students: "We will not increase the spirituality of our generation except through the enlargement of its fleshly qualities."

In his poems he cried out, "Expanses . . . expanses . . . enclose me not in cages of matter or mind." Yet one of his earliest publications, which he personally circulated in the towns and villages of his native Russia, was an exhortation to his brethren to be more careful about placing their headphylactery on the precise area of the forehead prescribed by law. Strangest of all, this man, held by many the greatest and most original religious thinker of our generation, is little known in Jewish circles and completely unknown to the non-Jewish world. Early settlers in Israel remember him, to be sure, and many of the anecdotes of his life have become part of Israeli folklore. But few even in Orthodox circles are more than scantily acquainted with his thought and teaching.

READING the writings of this extraordinary personality, I had found myself increasingly impressed with the striking relevance of his ideas to the present religious problems of Israel. So while in Jerusalem this past summer, I determined to look up Zvi Yehudah Kuk, the only son of Ha-Rav, "The Rabbi," as the father is now known.

I was told that Zvi Yehudah could be found at the Yeshiva, "The Center of the Rav," which his father had founded, situated in a street now named after him.

The approach to the Yeshiva is through a courtyard, past an eye clinic which occupies the first floor, and up some stairs in the back. Though the stone courtyard and stairs are well scrubbed, the air is slightly tinged with the odors from the poor sewage system of that section. A long corridor runs the length of the second floor, leading at one end to the Yeshiva proper, which consists of a large classroom and a small chapel. Toward the center of the corridor is an office and then some rooms which are occu-

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ABRAHAM ISAAC KUK, Chief Rabbi of Palestine from 1921 until his death in 1935, has some of the proportions of a legendary figure, but his passage into legend has had the effect of obscuring much of his actual teaching and personal quality. Yet just at this time, when newspapers daily report fresh manifestations of the religious strife which has disturbed the State of Israel since its establishment—and which has recently erupted into excited demonstrations in the United States—it may be that the voice of this by now somewhat remote mystic leader of Orthodoxy can offer the aptest and most practical commentary on the day's news. HERBERT WEINER, on a recent visit to Israel, attempted through personal contact with Rav Kuk's son, Zvi Yehudah Kuk, to find his way to the teachings of Rav Kuk and the tradition which his son carries on. Rabbi Weiner, author of *A Sabbath Handbook* (1951), is rabbi of the Reform Temple Israel in South Orange, New Jersey. He was born in Boston in 1919 and attended the University of Massachusetts, the Jewish Institute of Religion, and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His article "A Mystic Philosopher on East Broadway," like his present article a study in Judaism through personality, appeared in our issue for November 1952.

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pied by the family of Rav Kuk's daughter and her husband, who is today the acting head of the Yeshiva.

The Yeshiva seemed deserted as I entered. I glanced into the main room and saw two students—hats pushed back on their heads and engrossed in conversation. In the small office, a bearded man, evidently the secretary or administrator, greeted me in a friendly fashion, saying that Zvi Yehudah Kuk would soon return. He offered me an English pamphlet to read, which described the program and hopes of the "Center of the Rav," and appealed for funds.

After a while I rose and went into the large classroom, where the two young men glanced at me with polite curiosity and continued their conversation. On the wall near the window was a picture of Rav Kuk taken when he was Chief Rabbi, his black beard streaked with gray, and a large fur hat on his head. Directly below the picture a quotation from the *Ethics of the Fathers* was framed: "Be ye of the disciples of Aaron, loving and pursuing peace, loving mankind, and drawing them close to the Torah." On the other side of the window was a picture of a man wearing a medieval-style Arabic turban. It was a portrait of Maimonides, and it was somewhat surprising to find the picture of that great legal authority and rationalist in this Yeshiva, Rav Kuk being, I had considered, far closer in spirit to the poetic and mystic philosophy of Judah Halevi. In a way, though, the medieval physician and philosopher did express Rav Kuk's hopes for his own Yeshiva. Though he asked his students to set aside time for the study of the minutiae of the animal sacrifices which would have to be offered by the priests when the Temple should be rebuilt, he also urged that the curriculum of his Yeshiva include secular and scientific studies. "For how," he wrote, "can a teacher communicate with and improve his people unless he be acquainted with the ideas that set the style of the generation?" Above all, Kuk constantly insisted that only when Judaism was made fertile by true genius of mind and heart, could it reveal its full light to the world. This thought of combining great minds with Torah remained with him, literally to the end of his life. On the very day of his death, Dr. Zondek of the Hebrew University visited him. When he had finished his examination, the people standing around the bed heard Rav Kuk whisper to the distinguished but not particularly religious scientist, "May the day come when the great of the Jews will also be Jewishly great."

I was looking at the picture on the wall when the secretary came in to tell me that Rabbi Kuk had arrived, and I could see him in his office. Zvi Yehudah Kuk is quite different in appearance from his father. His eyes are small and twinkling, and a short white beard covers his rather fair skin. He took my hand in warm greeting, and asked how he could help me. I said something about being interested in learning more about Ha-Rav, his personality and ideas. Smiling, he nodded his head in eager assent: "Yes, he was unusual. He combined all levels together . . . the mystic and the legal; deep poetical feelings with clear logic and practical judgment . . . all together."

He agreed readily to set aside some hours for discussion of his father's teachings. Taking me by the arm, he walked with me into the corridor and out to the stairway. There, still holding my hand, he inquired as to my first name and my work, and invited me to visit him the coming Sabbath at home.

That Saturday afternoon, making sure I had a *yarmelke* in my pocket, I set out for the "Vineyard of Abraham" quarter of Jerusalem, where Zvi Yehudah Kuk lives. "The son of Rav Kuk"—this is what everybody calls him. I decided to add a question, if the mood permitted, about how it felt to go through life known mainly as the "son of" somebody else. Before such questions, however, the obvious topic to discuss was the present religious crisis in Israel.

As I walked along the streets toward the Orthodox quarter of the city, the symptoms of the crisis were evident. The walls of the buildings were plastered with large posters, signed by the Orthodox "Council of Elders." In the bright Jerusalem sunlight, the large, black letters of the posters seemed to project a shadow on the faces of the Sabbath strollers, who gathered about to read them. The posters warned of the plot of the "ungodly" to pass a national conscription bill, an "evil edict" which was going to separate the pious and chaste daughters of Israel from their families and subject them to the "brothel-

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like" physical examinations and atmosphere of the army. The language was sharp, even salacious in its implication. The men and women who paused to read the posters made no comment. Only occasionally a person would turn away with a half shake of the head and a bitter contraction of the lips.

As I crossed Herzl Street and entered into the more Orthodox quarter, the posters were more plentiful. Here the men stopping before them were dressed in the long coat-jackets and broad-brimmed hats worn by many of the Orthodox in Israel. This area of town was quieter, for the taxis bustling about in other streets would not take the chance of driving here: too many had been overturned on the Sabbath. But it was a tense sort of quiet.

Not far from the corner of Herzl Street, a young boy, his fists clenched, stood a few feet away from his bicycle, which had either fallen or been snatched from him. Around him, at a safe distance, six or seven younger children, wearing their Sabbath hats and long jackets, looked angrily at the owner of the bicycle, who was daring them to come closer. Across the street a young man had noticed the commotion and was approaching the group. He was dressed like the younger boys, but kept his jacket around his shoulders, the sleeves flapping by his side.

"Get away from here," he said as he came to the boy with the bicycle, who stood his ground and retorted only with a sharp and ugly Arabic curse. The young man came closer, and repeated grimly, "I asked you to get away from here quickly." The boy hesitated, then, looking around at the group, spat his curse at them again, picked up his bicycle, and rode away. The passers-by resumed their Sabbath stroll.

As I turned the corner of the street of the "Hundred Gates," in the heart of the Orthodox quarter, I took the *yarmelke* out of my pocket and put it on my head. Suddenly I heard the loud sound of a motorcycle. All stopped in their paths, and turned around to see what was happening.

Down the hill rode a tanned young man, his shirt open at the collar, smiling gleefully at the calls of *"Shabbos! Shabbos!"* ringing out about him. In the seat behind him was a girl, obviously disturbed at her boy-friend's bravado. The motorcycle traveled swiftly and was out of range before the stones which had been picked up by passers-by could be thrown.

These scenes were an appropriate prelude to my meeting with Zvi Yehudah Kuk, for it was to this problem—the religious schisms of Israel—that his father had dedicated most of his life and thought.

Zvi Yehudah Kuk lived on the first floor of a small building in the quiet "Vineyard of Abraham" quarter of Jerusalem. When I knocked at the door, the landlady answered and told me that Rabbi Kuk was still at the Yeshiva. She showed me into his room, which was refreshingly cool, the hot summer sun having been kept out of it by closed shutters. As the woman turned to leave, I asked whether the Rabbi lived here alone. "Yes," she replied, "since his wife died he lives here alone." She added: "His wife was a wonderful person, and they were very, very happy together. Unfortunately they had no children. He has been living here with my husband and myself many years." At the door she stopped again. "He is really a *tsaddik* . . . a saintly person . . . kind and humble. He'll be in soon. Do make yourself comfortable."

On one side of the room there were shelves with books and manuscripts, and on the opposite wall was a full-length photograph of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kuk, dressed in the fur hat and long jacket which the Orthodox Jews of Eastern Europe have worn for centuries, and which they still wear, even in the semi-tropical climate of Israel. It was not difficult to associate this picture of the bearded Orthodox rabbi in fur hat with some of the stories told of Rav Kuk.

So pious had he been as a youth, I remembered it was told, that at times he returned from walks with his face bleeding from scratches. When asked where they came from, he had confessed that they were self-inflicted, and that he had wanted to cause himself pain while passing women in the street, so as to drive "strange thoughts" from his mind.

A comrade of that time recalls that once on Tisha B'av, while reading the Lamentations of Jeremiah, young Abraham Isaac Kuk's tears had dropped so profusely that his friend couldn't help saying, "Look, I too

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love Israel, and bewail its destruction . . . but why do you seem to feel it all so much more deeply?"

"You don't understand," the young man had replied, "you are not a *Kohen*—a priest—as I am." Kuk never forgot that as a descendant of the priests he possessed special responsibilities for maintaining holiness in the land of Israel.

In those days he was known among his fellow students and teachers as the "squint-eyed genius," because of the peculiar set of his eyes. I looked more closely at the large, dark eyes in the photograph, for those who knew him in his lifetime always remarked about their glow and their quality of seeming to look into distances: "Expanses . . . my soul craves expanses."

WHEN Zvi Yehudah Kuk entered, he took my hand and greeted me warmly by my first name. Then, urging me to sit down, he hurried into the kitchen, returning in a moment with two cups of water and a bowl of grapes. After offering me the grapes, he sat down at the table beside me, and quietly moved his lips in a benediction before drinking from his cup of water.

"Well, how shall we begin?" he said. "Shall we read from my father's writings?" He motioned to the shelves. "You know, most of his writings are still unpublished."

I began to suggest a question, but he interrupted, and placing his hand on mine said, "You know, if you will be more comfortable, you don't have to wear the *yarmelke* here."

Perhaps I should not have been surprised by this remark from a man whose father had often been criticized by his Orthodox brethren for joining the "freethinking Halutzim" in dancing the Hora. Yet the invitation to remove my *yarmelke* did seem strange coming from an Orthodox rabbi, who not only wore a skullcap himself, but whose fringed undergarment peeked through his shirt in complete fulfillment of the Biblical commandment, "And thou shalt look upon them." Smiling a bit at my surprise, Rabbi Kuk explained, "You see, I don't want any *mechitza*—any artificial boundaries—between us. I want us to be really close, and I want you to feel natural, and it seems to me you are not really accustomed to wearing a *yarmelke*." I muttered something about being quite comfortable in one, and even wearing it in my own home on occasion. But Rabbi Kuk patted my hand reassuringly: "It's all right. We will get to know each other better, and you won't feel so strained."

Flustered, yet encouraged by his warm, personal tone, I decided suddenly to put aside the general questions about religion in Israel, and raise the more intimate ones. I found difficulty in conveying my thought to Rabbi Kuk. What I wanted to know about his father was . . . had he really succeeded in feeling in his own life that harmony and peace of soul and mind which he claimed could exist along with that "restlessness which arises from the never-ceasing expansion of the soul"? And had he really reconciled the fleshly with the spiritual? And what of the other conflicts which must have existed in the actual life of one who, as Chief Rabbi, was so deeply involved in the petty details and political wranglings of community life? Were these not burdensome to a spirit which yearned for "boundless heights"? And what about his personal life? So often the family life of a community leader is impoverished because of his outside activities. How was it in their home? I was somewhat abashed at the boldness of my own questions, and Zvi Yehudah Kuk also seemed surprised at the turn of the interview, but his eyes retained their good humor.

"We have so little time that we should really talk about his teachings, and some of your questions can best be answered if we understand my father's way of thinking."

He hesitated, then decided to answer. "As to my personal memories of him . . . of course, he was always overburdened with the needs of the community. Everything came to him. A call from the High Commissioner asking his intervention in keeping the Jews from blowing the *shofar* at the Wailing Wall, or someone asking for help in getting a visa. And everything he liked to do personally. Even when he was sick the last months of his life, I can remember his running through the streets to the consulate to arrange some papers for somebody . . . the water bottles, which he carried to relieve his pain, flapping about his body as he hurried. He always wanted to do things with his own hands."

He pointed to the shelves filled with manuscripts. "He even refused help in the

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simple copying from other books required for his legal writing. He called it his 'black work.' If others could build roads and sweep streets, then he wanted to do some 'black work.' Still, despite all his activities, he tried his best to save time for study with me. And in the home I can only remember his face gentle and good toward everybody and on all occasions."

He glanced at the picture of his father. In the photograph there was a serene half-smile about Rav Kuk's lips, but the dark eyes seemed more sad than smiling. Rav Kuk had spoken much of the joy to be found in holiness, but he had also written so eloquently about that "melancholy pressing on his heart, saddening and embittering his life without conscious explanation." He had tried to explain it. It was the result, he wrote, of the "struggle of the soul, caged in its physical bonds and reaching out for a life of freedom . . . a life finer, clearer, and brighter . . . yet failing to attain it . . . and this struggle is the cause of the melancholy of the soul."

"And since this is its source," he wrote, "why, then, one should take advantage of this mood of the soul, lift pearls out of murky depths, and distill from this melancholy exquisite emotions. For, after all, in whatever manner and wherever a man's soul makes itself evident, there is evidence of the beginning of deliverance; the light of salvation pushing to reveal itself from behind the blackness."

But had Abraham Isaac Kuk really been able to "lift pearls out of murky depths"? True, there were many stories told of his saintly capacity to "sweeten and justify the harsh judgments," even in his personal life. When he was suffering from cancer in the last months of his life, he was seized with a spell of pain while trying to study with some friends. After the pain had softened, he turned to his friends and said, "Man does not know how grateful he should be to his Creator for that suffering which is able to cleanse his sins. Blessed be the Merciful One who for seventy years of my life has not deprived me of His goodness. Praise be to God whose goodness is forever."

But these were stories of the type often repeated about a religious leader after his death. Had Rav Kuk really succeeded in feeling the "light of salvation pushing to reveal itself from behind the blackness"? Such matters only a very close friend—or a son—could reveal, and I tried to explain again to Zvi Yehudah Kuk what I was after. He listened to me closely, his eyes still twinkling a bit, and nodded his head encouragingly. When I had finished, he placed his hand on mine and said, "Yes, there were conflicts. But he was always able to lift his soul above them."

I must have looked a bit unhappy at his answer, for he added as if eager to please, "But of course there were a few times that I can recall when he was provoked and did lose his composure . . . but those were very few."

He went to the bookcase and leafed through the pages of a book he had edited, containing his father's many letters. "Look," he said, "maybe I can show you something interesting," and he turned to a letter written to somebody who had evidently accused Rav Kuk of shirking his "obligation" in not reviewing a book which had been sent him. Rav Kuk had answered him, and Zvi Yehudah Kuk read a sentence aloud from the letter. "I am obligated to no man, but only to God alone." He looked to see if this satisfied me, explaining, "Of course he was not quite right. He was a community servant, and was obligated to man." He continued to turn the leaves of the book as if looking for some further revelation of his father's weaker moments, and finally found a letter written to himself. He read it aloud. In this letter, Rav Kuk complained to his son about the multitude of petty community tasks which robbed him of time for study and for other important matters. But even this bit of "wickedness" was dulled by the observation in the same letter that "after all, one cannot know how great in importance are even the seemingly small things."

"This was his way," Zvi Yehudah Kuk explained, "to see always the great principle and possibility, even in the smallest detail, and the detail in the principle. As for the conflict between his poetic talents and his interest in legal detail, you may have heard how he once put it: 'Even as there are laws of poetry, so there is a poetry in law.'

"Actually, there were times when my father did act and speak with irritation, but mostly it was calculated sharpness, to achieve a certain end, as when he ignored a govern-

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ment official—you must have heard about that."

I confessed that I hadn't, and he told me how, one day in 1929, a British government official had ordered the small Jewish community of Hebron to surrender its arms and how, a few days later, they had been attacked by Arabs, and most of the community killed. Shortly thereafter, the government official and the Chief Rabbi had attended the same function. The official extended his hand as the Chief Rabbi passed him on the platform, but Rav Kuk ignored him, explaining later that he could not touch the hand which, in the phrase of Isaiah, was "stretched forth but covered with blood."

"But as to the uncalculated moments of irritation or sharpness," Zvi Yehudah concluded, "they were very few."

"Even when he was being attacked by people of his own Orthodox community?" I pressed.

"Yes, even then. He was able, always, to achieve an elevation of the soul. To 'lift the soul'—this was the technique he always used in approaching all the problems of life. To go 'up to the roots,' to 'see things from above.' This was always his ability, and the secret of his strength."

Quite discouraged by now at this picture of unalloyed saintliness, I was about to ask just how "going up to the roots" could help solve the very concrete and sharp-edged religious and political problems of modern Israel, but the hour was late, and I decided to save this question for another meeting.

THE next few days I spent away from Jerusalem, visiting in the immigration camps and outlying settlements. The Cabalistic advice to "go up to the roots" seemed more and more inadequate to the realistic problems which were threatening the very survival of the new state. As dangerous as the Arab threats and the export-import imbalance, was the political, cultural, and religious fragmentation of the little country; the distrust and antagonism between Israel No. 1 and Israel No. 2, as they half facetiously called themselves; the complaint of "veteran settlers" that the dreamland of Herzl and Ahad Ha'am was becoming but another trivial Levantine state; the lack of communication and understanding between Western and Oriental Jew, and between the various groups of Oriental Jews themselves; the continuing and sharpening religious strife between the Orthodox and non-Orthodox communities over the problems of religion and state. All pointed up Israel's pressing need for some inner quality of nationhood that could rise above present fragmentation. This was the problem I had hoped to hear something about from the son of Rav Kuk. After all, it was to this problem of bringing the "diverse" together that Rav Kuk had devoted most of his life and thought.

Indeed, he had achieved some success. To the "freethinking" nationalists he had always spoken of the dangers arising from a Jewish nationalism which, if separated from its "soul," would become only another group "selfism," and eventually lose the very source of its inspiration. And to his Orthodox brethren, outraged by the contempt of the native-born "sabra" for holy traditions, he offered another explanation. True, he admitted, there was an overemphasis in modern Israel on the achievements of bone and muscle, and there was an aggressive callousness—"*chutzpah*," he called it—toward those whose labors were in the world of prayer and Torah. But, he insisted, it was the "*chutzpah*" of the Messiah, for we had lost, in our exile among the nations, those "gross animal" qualities of life which must be part of the being of every healthy people. We had, so to speak, become "over-etherealized" and had neglected the "coarser" dimensions of existence which the holy must also possess if it is ever to attain real power in the world. "The vessels must be thickened before they can be proper receptacles for the highest and the most intense illuminations."

True, the increase of *chutzpah*—the brazenness that could bring a man to find pleasure in riding his motorcycle through the Orthodox quarters on the Sabbath—this indeed hurt. Yet was it not the necessary swinging of the pendulum back from too much and too narrow a holiness, perhaps, to the other extreme of too much fleshliness? In any case, it was a temporary excess, and eventually the holy would receive its due. "Not, however, in quarrelsome or impudent manner, but by so growing in strength that the 'unholy' would bow beneath it, enter into it, and the coarser elements would be completely transmuted and holiness would be eventually fuller and greater than before."

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Rav Kuk did not become the Chief Rabbi of Palestine until 1921. But long before then, as the Rabbi of Jaffa, he had become a figure beloved by "religious" and "freethinkers" alike. The Orthodox liked to tell of their Rabbi whose prayer was so intense that once, before the evening service, he was seen to leave the synagogue suddenly and engage the gardener outside in conversation about trivial matters. He explained later that the fervor of his heart was at that moment too intense for containment in the words of the prayer book. In order to cool his ardor, he had chatted a while with the gardener.

On their side, the "freethinkers" liked to repeat what the Rav often used to say in answering the Orthodox who criticized him for excessive tolerance toward "non-believers." "There is a place for distinction between pure and unpure, and holy and unholy," Kuk would say to them. "In the Temple there was a Holy of Holies, into which only one man, the High Priest, could enter, and that only at one time of the year, on Yom Kippur. But," he reminded his listeners, "what was the situation when the Holy of Holies was being built? Was it then built only by the High Priest, or even by the priests? Did not the ordinary carpenters and the hewers of stone also enter freely and contribute their offering to the total structure? We are building today, and we have not yet completed our 'Holy of Holies.' All . . . all have a portion to offer in this building, and none more right than another in bringing their offering."

The non-religious also liked to remind the Orthodox of how their beloved Chief Rabbi had suffered calumny and persecution from extremists in his own camp. There were, indeed, religious fanatics who had accused the pious rabbi of heterodoxy. In 1909, while in Jaffa, Rav Kuk found himself in the midst of a trying controversy with Orthodox colleagues, both in and outside of Israel. With the settlement of Jews in Israel, a law that had once been but discussion material for the Yeshiva suddenly became a real problem. According to Biblical proscription, land owned by Jews in Israel must lie fallow every seventh year, the *shmitta* year. This year arrived in the Jewish calendar, and with it the problem. Rav Kuk did not sidestep the difficulty of reconciling life with Torah. He found some rabbinic authorities who agreed that in the "hour of urgent necessity" it was permissible to work the land by a legal fiction—that is, by a fictitious selling of the land to a non-Jew for the year. Kuk decided to follow these authorities. It was apparent to him that if the *shmitta* were enforced, there would be no future possibility of receiving investment capital for Palestine. The newly planted settlement would be unable to survive. He ruled, therefore, that the *shmitta* year could be circumvented. His decision was attacked by a number of leading rabbis, but Rav Kuk stood his ground.

Not that Rav Kuk ever surrendered one jot or tittle of the law. Rather, he claimed, Orthodoxy was not revealing its fullest dimensions to the world. In a letter to a critic, he outlined his attitude: "We have abandoned the soul of Torah. Orthodoxy is occupied with negative quarreling, and concerns itself with vain delusions which are destroyed by the realities of life. Nor should we take comfort in the thought that the atheistic elements of our population will likely be the first to meet destruction. Such trouble is not 'half comfort' but double trouble. The proper way is open before us. *All* the Torah, with *all* its spiritual connotations should be known to us. If only a portion of our talented people, who know Torah and are blessed with good minds, would volunteer to try to reveal the pure ideas of our faith, to clarify our theology, the meaning of our Prophets, the depths of our divine spirit . . . our great ideas and clear thoughts so worthy of being the life foundations of many peoples . . . we could then begin that great heavenly work of clearing the contaminated spirit from off the earth, and of making a beginning of the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

"But some, because of darkness of heart, and smallness of faith, and others, because of pride and lack of information, still think that the smaller type of Torah, narrow and dry, which did not have the power to resist the depredations of other cultures and antagonistic spiritual forces, will still, today, be our source of healing. Do not accuse me, my dear friend, and I hope no man will accuse me, of smallness of love, God forbid, for the practical aspects of Torah, or of lack of enthusiasm in study and expansion of this practical Torah. . . . But at a time like this,

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when the possibility of the destruction of the higher Torah is at hand . . . when someone does come along and say that our help can be found in the *soul* of Torah . . . the critics complain and object: 'What do you want . . . mysticism, ethics, science, philosophy, sermonics, poetry . . . didn't all of these things once deceive us?'

"Complaints like this are enough to choke the voice of God within us crying 'Seek me and ye shall live.' . . ."

And Rav Kuk concluded his letter with a postscript, "As regards that rumor you mentioned . . . I have not seen the book, but in no way is there any place for strife between lovers of truth like ourselves."

OF COURSE, the majority of Israel's citizens today do not see the religious difficulties of the land in terms of Torah, whether limited or expanded. Many are upset by the decision of the coalition government to place intimate matters of marriage and divorce completely in the hands of the Orthodox rabbinate, in return for a promise on the part of some members of the Religious Bloc to vote for the national conscription bill. They are embittered and frustrated by what they feel is a lack of leadership and courage on the part of the official Chief Rabbinate.

I was determined, in my next visit to Rabbi Kuk, not to let him escape a discussion of these concrete problems with advice about "going up to the roots" or "lifting the soul."

Upon returning to Jerusalem, I came directly to the Yeshiva to look for Rabbi Kuk, and was told that he would be present for the evening prayers. The services were held in the small synagogue of the Yeshiva. Very few students were about, and the prayers were offered quickly, in an atmosphere quite similar to many of the dozens of similar synagogues in the area. The story of Rav Kuk stepping out of the synagogue because his desire to pray was too intense passed through my mind. I wondered again if I was mistaken in feeling that Zvi Yehudah Kuk was somewhat lonely in his own Yeshiva. I didn't see him in the congregation, but after the prayers noticed him standing in back near the door. He greeted me in his usual warm and eager manner, took me aside, and asked how I had found things in traveling about the country. Though I did not want to provoke a full discussion then, I did tell him how much I had been depressed by my trip.

"Yes," he said quietly, lowering his face, "we do need a bit more love and faith in Israel today."

The next day I went to see him at his home. I began our discussion with a story, probably apocryphal, about an American who had visited a so-called "freethinking" kibbutz and engaged a member of the settlement in a conversation about religious matters. After some preliminaries, the American rabbi had come out and asked the settler, "But aren't you at all religious?" The settler looked at him in surprise, and said, "Of course not." The visitor had pressed further. "But don't you have any belief in God, or any convictions about the possibility of a spiritual contact between man and the mystery of life?" The kibbutznik appeared surprised, for he had been expressing strong positive convictions on these very questions. "Why, of course I believe in God . . . but what has God got to do with religion?"

Zvi Yehudah Kuk smiled at the story. "Sometimes I think," he said, "that what we need in Israel is more belief for the 'believers' and more 'freedom' for the 'freethinkers.' The Orthodox, the 'believers,' need more faith in the power of a God who evidently has a place in His pattern for all types of Jews, and they must stop worrying about whether their own type of holiness is being copied by others, and have faith that their God, who has preserved Israel and brought the people again to its land, has His designs and purposes. As for the 'freethinkers,' they should be more free in their thought, free enough to break through the little political and economic formulas by which they define their lives and the world, to press beyond the limitations of ideological catchwords and glimpse the mysteries and vistas which are not encompassed by small definitions. Our difficulty is that in both camps we have smallness of mind and littleness of heart. Yes, more belief for the believers, and more freedom of thought for the 'freethinkers,' and above all, love, a bit more love." He had been talking with a half-smile, but now he became serious.

"Our Orthodox Jews say that they observe the Commandments. And they do carefully observe the commandment to hate those who desecrate the law. But there is a commandment greater than all of these: the command-

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ment to love. To love one's neighbor, even if he doesn't agree with you, and this, the greatest of all commandments, they neglect."

He paused as if wondering whether to continue the thought. "Of course, our world does not always recognize the full meaning of love. People associate love with sentimental feelings alone. But love includes much more. The act of love should bring all levels of the human being into play, his intuitions, his emotions, and his logic and mind as well. You know that in the Cabala the attribute of 'lovingkindness' is identified with *chochma*—wisdom. Love really is a *chochma,* a total wisdom. And like any other 'wisdom' it requires study and analysis and thought, and it cannot be left to depend on a bit of emotion or sentiment alone.

"You asked what my father would have said at this time about the religious controversies in our country. He believed in the oneness of all Israel, and in the holiness of all its parts. And he always urged one section of the people to recognize the spark of holiness which exists even on the other side. The non-religious must realize, even if they don't agree, that the Orthodox are upholding a heritage and values which do possess holiness, and for this they must be treated with respect and consideration. And the Orthodox must remember that all of Israel, even non-religious Israel, has sparks of holiness, and must not be treated with contempt or read out of the Jewish people. They must remember that although their own religious institutions are holy, our religion declares that the institutions of the Jewish state, by virtue of the fact that they are instruments of a Jewish land, and a Jewish people, also possess a certain sanctity, and must not be slandered. It is in this spirit of seeing 'from the roots,' from above, the oneness of Israel, that all discussions should be held and all decisions made."

He spoke rapidly and with an eager intensity. When he finally released his grip on my hand, it was almost time for the evening prayers. "But we should spend more time on my father's basic teachings," he said. "Have you read *The Lights of Repentance*? This book really contains his fundamental ideas. He not only recommended it to others, but would set aside periods of time to study it himself every year before the High Holy Days."

Then, looking at the sun beginning to set outside, he rose and put on his neat black coat. As we went out together, I asked him if he could sum up himself the major characteristics of his father's thought. We walked along, and he considered the question.

"Well," he said slowly, "I think that the secret of my father's thought was his power of 'inclusion,' of being able always to see what seemed to be isolated events and fragments of reality as included within a larger whole. He was able to see not only the branches but also the roots and the tree as a whole."

ABRAHAM ISAAC KUK, though involved all his life with the "dry and practical" areas of Jewish law, was attracted from the depths of his soul to the Cabala, the Jewish mystical writings. He was himself a mystic and tried again and again to convey in rhapsodic outpourings of prose and poetry the intuitive flashes of harmony and joy which he personally experienced. But he realized that the knowledge of the mystic could be conveyed to others only by the use of visual imagery, and he often presented his ideas in that Cabalistic terminology of "the tree and the root" to which his son so often referred.

Man's visible life, his thoughts, deeds, and physical appearance, are likened to the trunk and branches of a tree. It is, so to speak, an upside-down tree whose visible exterior is on earth, but whose invisible roots come from heaven. In terms of this image, the concepts of good and evil, wisdom and sin, receive their meaning.

It is necessary for the branch or leaf of a tree to maintain its connection with the root. Should it sever or even narrow its channels to that root source, it would be emptied of life-giving content and ultimately wither and die. Sin is such an act of "cutting off" or narrowing of communication between branch and root, between part and whole, and its result is pain and destruction. To avoid such destruction, individuals must realize themselves to be not independent entities, but branches connected to a larger totality—a people or a nation—through which connection they can best draw from the root source of life. And these larger social groupings, too, should feel themselves to be branches on the tree of humanity.

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Sometimes when the "connections" are broken or warped, more than self-destruction takes place. The power which is in the root runs amuck, as if the force coming from the heart of the universe, which should have been used to bring together man and God, neighbor and neighbor, nation with nation, as if all this energy, unable to flow into proper channels, runs wild and moves the individual parts to unreasonable acts of destruction upon others as well as themselves.

It is the purpose of the Torah to see that such "cutting" of connections does not take place. The purpose of the commandments or *mitzvot* of the Torah is to give us a pattern of thought and action which can widen, rather than narrow, the channels of communication between individual and group, and between man and his root source of life. The goal of the Torah, and, indeed, of religion, is therefore to achieve a greater and more abundant flow of life for man and his world from the Source of Life.

Since, then, the good deed or *mitzvah* is a source of fuller life, and since sin is essentially an emptying of life content, it requires only "wisdom" to bring us to the right path —the wisdom which perceives that all the seemingly separate parts of creation are bound together in unity, that all men and nations share an ultimate identity of fate and well-being, and no fragment of the whole —no party, no ideology, no single incident or fact—should be seen in isolation, but always "lifted to the roots" and comprehended within its larger meaning. To the degree that one achieves such wisdom or *chochma,* one develops one's capacity for faith and love: faith is really the understanding that all isolated events in time and space are necessary and ultimately good when seen from the total perspective, and love—that is, respect and consideration and feeling for the other—comes when we are conscious of our basic identification with that other.

In the book *Lights of Repentance,* and in other writings of Rav Kuk, these thoughts are poetically phrased and infused by the spirit of a man who, in his own personality and life, seems to have achieved the wisdom and power often to "ascend to the roots."

But there was one afternoon when the shaded room and Rabbi Kuk's gentle voice were not enough to lift us above the violent tensions of life. It was the day that I came upon a demonstration of Orthodox women, several hundred in number, before the Knesset. Crowding up to the doors of the Knesset, the women insisted on interrupting the session to protest the national conscription bill which, they shouted, would separate pious daughters from their families, their faith, and their chastity. The organized demonstration soon degenerated into bedlam. The hats of the distraught guards were flung from their heads by the women, and the streets resounded with screams of "Nazi!" "Murderer!" "Shoot us! Why don't you shoot us?"

The crowd which had gathered on the sidewalks looked on with mixed emotions of amusement and disgust. But one little man moved into the midst of the women and shouted: "Nazis, you say! If they were Nazis they would take guns and mow you down like this"—and he held his arms in front of him in imitation of a machine gun. "What right have you got here? Why didn't you bring *it* with you?" His voice rose even above the shrieking of the women, "Why didn't you bring your white flag with you?"

The women directly in front of him were taken aback by his shouting and one of them burst into tears, crying, "But we are good Jews! We keep the Sabbath and Holidays and the laws of Moses. . . . We are good Jews!"

Both the women and the onlookers knew what "white flag" the man was referring to. During the war of liberation, an extreme segment of the Orthodox community had raised the white flag of surrender over its section of town, and had informed the Arab leadership that they were perfectly willing to surrender, and even preferred Arab rule to the sovereignty of an atheistic Jewish government. This was the same group which later sent a letter to the Pope asking his intervention against the authorities of the Jewish state. It was obvious that the man was articulating the bitterness of many others who were grimly watching the demonstration. In their minds were angry memories of the war period: the edict of the Chief Rabbi, exempting all rabbinical students from war service; the young men who came bearing certificates of their Orthodoxy from bearded uncles or cousins, but who lost their "faith" as soon as the war was over. Watching from the street

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were fathers and mothers whose children had been killed or crippled by a war whose "holiness" was not sufficient, in the eyes of the rabbis, to distract yeshiva students from their studies. Now their children were again guarding the borders, policing the streets, running electric plants and hospitals on the Sabbath, and doing those tasks which the Orthodox considered a "desecration of the Name," but the benefits of which they did not refuse.

The man continued shouting about the "white flag" until the police managed to push the women back from the entrance. When a space had been cleared, an Orthodox member of the Knesset came out and stood quietly looking over the scene. The cigar in his hand seemed to fit, rather than contrast, with his well-fed and well-clad body, and his luxurious black beard. Despite the "Orthodox" cut of his clothes there was something about him more redolent of back-room political caucuses than of the Chambers of Torah. After calmly watching the progress of the demonstration with obvious satisfaction, he slowly turned and walked back to the Knesset. The demonstration went on until the fire trucks turned their hoses on the women. Then, they quickly re-formed their ranks and marched to the house of the Chief Rabbi to continue their protest.

I HAD come upon the scene on my way to Rabbi Kuk's; I described the affair to him, evidently conveying the bitterness I had shared with the onlookers at the behavior of the women and the bearded representative of the Knesset, who had probably arranged the demonstration; for even as I spoke, I saw the distress in Rabbi Kuk's face. But I was wrong to identify him with those demonstrators. He was alone, and so, too, must his father have been. An Orthodox Jew, alienated from the "freethinkers" who made so light of what was sacred to him, but alienated also from the Orthodox community, whose spirit has been so largely absorbed into small-visioned legalism and politics, leaving little over for the many in Israel who thirst for spirit and religiosity. Perhaps no person is more alone in Israel today than the genuine religious traditionalist, who desires the "full Torah of heart and soul."

Rabbi Kuk bent his head and said quietly, "Yes, we do have smallness of mind and heart. We know so well the laws of milk and meat, but the laws of community life, of respect for the institutions and instruments of the community . . . these laws we have forgotten." He placed his hand on mine, "My father, whose memory is a blessing, used to be criticized because he extended his hand to non-religious kibbutzniks. They told him that one who desecrated the Torah was not worthy of his friendship, but he would say to them, 'Better that I should risk the sin of "causeless love" than that of "causeless hate."'"

His voice became stronger, and he looked directly at me. "It is true that things are bad with us now, and they will yet grow worse. There is corruption in the land, and a lowering of morale. There is hatred between groups and an ugliness of behavior all about. This is the last chapter of two thousand years of exile and degradation, and all the economic, political, and religious subjugation, yes, all the words and all the blows that have ever been dealt us, now their wounds are showing."

He spoke rapidly, and his eyes were bright. "These are the difficulties, yes. But these are also the very proof and sign of the great moment now unfolding itself here. Israel is like a laboratory in which is taking place the greatest synthesis and climax of our history. Peoples who have been separated from each other by two thousand years, different in language, color of skin, tastes in food, are suddenly being molded together into oneness. And even as in the laboratory when there is a synthesis of diverse elements, it is accomplished by noise, so here, too, we have our boiling and fury and storm. But all of this—it is the very proof of this great and unique moment of the ingathering and of the re-creation of the Jewish Tree of Life." His voice was quiet, but tense with effort as if he was trying to lift us both "to the upper roots."

But the ugliness of the demonstration I had just witnessed persisted in my mind. Wasn't there, I asked him, a danger in this advice always to "lift above"? Didn't it tend to make too distant the very real and immediate problems of right and wrong? Could not one "lift" oneself away from the responsibility of taking definite sides in the issues of the day?

He leaned forward, eager for me to under-

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stand. "But specific decisions and strategy can be even better clarified from the upper roots. One must make specific judgments, but they should be made from the viewpoint, not of the individual section or political party, but from the level where the whole is seen. The detail is not less important or less clear because you see it as part of the whole. On the contrary, it is more important precisely because it manifests the whole. My father was able to make decisions on a very practical and logical level."

Feeling that the point was not yet clear, he went on: "Look . . . in this room there are light and dark objects. If we let the outside light in, then the gradations of light and dark here will change. What seems light now may, in contrast to the light outside, be dark, but the objects we saw before—they are not more blurred, but are made clearer by letting in the brighter light from outside."

I persisted, thinking still how easy it was to be philosophical in his shaded room: "If we are always trying to see our concrete problems from a higher light, revealing the faultiness of our own judgments, then perhaps our struggles and distinctions of good and evil aren't worth the effort."

He was silent as if forming his thought, and then spoke slowly. "It may be, indeed, that there are different levels of truth in the universe. What is light in this room now may certainly be dark as compared to the brilliant sunlight outside. Even our distinctions between good and evil, or life and death, may be inadequate from a point of view which encompasses more than our limited approach to reality. But why couldn't our universe, by design, have different standards of truth operating on different levels? And we must work only on our level, and with the limited world and vision given to us."

We were again in the "hidden" world of "lights and trees," so different from the concrete world of violence that had manifested itself in Jerusalem that morning. But perhaps Rav Kuk was right in claiming that our activities in the "revealed world" would be clearer and wiser if they were influenced by wisdom and light of the "hidden world." Perhaps that vague atmosphere termed "causeless love," and the vision of a historic destiny, inclusive of all the diverse political and religious groupings of the Jewish people —perhaps these seemingly abstract ideas and moods were needed to achieve both wiser and more practical judgments even on matters like the national conscription bill. Perhaps, as the Cabala claims, our troubles do derive from "separations"—from separation of man from man, of flesh from spirit, of the outer life of activity from the inner life of ideas, or of the practical decisions of everyday life from the invisible mood of "causeless love."

WHEN the time came for me to leave Jerusalem and Zvi Yehudah Kuk, I brought along a movie camera. All partings, the Sages say, are like a sixtieth part of death, and I hoped my films would somewhat minimize this fraction. Our talks together had come to mean much in a very personal way, for his eagerness "not to allow any boundaries" had taken our relationship beyond the formal.

He looked at the movie apparatus on my shoulder as I entered the room, but said nothing. I told him I was leaving that afternoon, and we spoke for a while about Jews coming to and leaving the Holy Land. His father, of course, had firmly believed that all Jews should return to the land of their historic birth, and I asked him if he also felt that way. He chose his words delicately, conscious of the fact that I was leaving.

"There is, I think, a special connection between this land and Jews. They do fit each other. After all, this is the cradle. Here the Jewish soul was created. I really think," he smiled gently, "that even the light, the climate, the shape of the hills, particularly fit the soul of the Jew and bring the highest out of it."

"But," I said, "what about the five million Jews in America? Don't you think they also have a special destiny and role in Jewish history?"

"Of course, of course," he said quickly. "But though you live in a wonderful and free country, isn't there, Jewishly, a type of 'slavery'? Not, of course, of the body, but a twisting of mind and spirit, no matter how slight. For instance, when you try to think through problems about the Jewish people or Jewish ideas, don't you even subconsciously strive for conclusions which make your relationship with non-Jews more comfortable? Don't you avoid certain conclusions, even if

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they be true? But you certainly have important work there," he added, as if unwilling to push the point. "Tell me about your own work."

I tried to describe the work of a rabbi in the United States. He was particularly interested in the description of services in a liberal synagogue. He asked what prayers the Reform group omitted or changed, and nodded his read encouragingly as I answered.

"But I see," he interrupted me gently, "that *you* haven't taken off your own *yarmelke*. I am afraid I haven't been able to remove entirely the *mechitza*—the boundary between us. I am really sorry." His eyes were smiling, but I was still at a loss for an answer, and mumbled the Talmudic injunction about "respecting the sensitivity of others." For the first time I saw a flicker of irritation pass over his face. "No, no, that is exactly what I do not want, for you to be something not natural to yourself out of deference to me. Why should we have to think that we must always stamp our image upon others?"

He spoke with deep feeling, and then, dropping the subject abruptly, rose from the table and went to the shelves on which his father's manuscripts were stacked. "We should really spend our little time studying a bit." He looked through some manuscripts. "My father, blessed be his memory, didn't organize his writings. He always envied those who had a talent for putting their creativity in order, but still he felt that such creativity was secondary. Primary creativity is like the lightning flash."

He brought a few manuscripts to the table. "He wrote and wrote. He would take up his pen whenever he had a moment, and everything—poems, legal observations, philosophy, commentaries on the prayers—he wrote swiftly, and would rarely rewrite or cross out." He showed me a page of manuscript in the fine handwriting of his father, and read aloud, "There are times when I feel low and worthless, but then I think of the divine soul within me, and I am raised. . . ."

Rabbi Kuk's eyes twinkled, "You see, he even wrote personal confessions."

I interrupted to ask if he himself had not written something we could read this last hour. He seemed surprised, but pleased, and took down a magazine from the bookshelf. It contained one of his own pieces and we began to read it together. It was finely written, and the ideas were stimulating and well worked out.

I could not resist the question which had been with me ever since meeting the son of Abraham Isaac Kuk. So often the children of great men break from their father's path in order to assert their own talents. Did Zvi Yehudah Kuk not feel any resentment at being known as "the son of Rav Kuk"? His eyes lit up in amusement. "I would really be satisfied to consider myself a continuation of my father. Of course," he smiled playfully, "his style, some say, was a bit too poetic and vague, and I try to make my writings clearer. But he is the source, I am only the continuation." Then he became serious. "The truth is that Ha-Rav was one of the truly gigantic personalities of all generations. There are great minds who specialize in this or that talent, but only rarely does someone rise above and synthesize them all. Rav Kuk had such a 'primary source mind.' It drew from an elemental creative power which expressed its genius on different levels and through diverse talents."

The time had come for parting, and Zvi Yehudah Kuk took my arm and accompanied me through the door and onto the sidewalk. Hesitatingly I stopped and asked him if he would mind being photographed. He patted my arm and said, "But it isn't necessary."

"Well," I persisted awkwardly, "just to remember everything better."

He grasped my hand. "We will remember each other in better ways."

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FREUD AND BOAS: SECULAR RABBIS?

Vienna Gaon; Tsaddik of Morningside Heights

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

WE ARE too enlightened these days to admit that we want a picture or a poem (or even a novel) to tell us a story, but non-fiction remains an enclave where the reader is still Caliph. The biographer in particular is greeted with a brusque "None of your fancy art or style, now, don't bother placing the subject or discussing his ideas, just tell me what sort of man he was. Was he like me?"

Here are recent biographies* of two men who have substantially reshaped our world, and the degree to which they are personal is exactly defined by their subtitles: the Freud, "The Formative Years and the Great Discoveries," about half; the Boas, "The Science of Man in the Making," not at all. Ernest Jones, the dean of living Freudian analysts, has written what appears from this first volume to be one of the great biographies, a perfect blend of devotion and objectivity, with a dash of suppressed hostility to give it tartness. Jones is the only person outside the family who has seen Freud's love letters, which he uses richly but with basic good taste; he knows how the historic case of "Miss Anna O" came out because Breuer told Freud and Freud told him (she worked up a false pregnancy by Breuer, causing treatment to be abruptly terminated, and ended as a social worker); he is not beyond a few sly psychoanalytic interpretations of his own.

Melville Herskovits, a student of Boas who has become one of the foremost American anthropologists, gives us a brief study that, within the impersonal confines of Scribner's Twentieth Century Library series, is a model of intelligent popularization. We learn such personal reactions as Boas's reservations about Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* and his resolute failure to appreciate Freud (whom he had known at Clark University on Freud's only trip to America), but these are handled as scientific evaluations rather than private biases. Even where later American anthropology has repudiated Boas (on his classification of American Indian languages, for example) we are given this, not in such terms as "error" and "repudiation," but as the inevitable progress of scientific knowledge. Herskovits omits any mention of Boas's entanglement with the "left" in the last decade of his life.

THE overwhelming first impression we get from *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* is of familiarity, of knowing the story so well. Here is the boy growing up in a middle-class Jewish family with a fable of descent from famous scholars and a legendary family history going back to the destruction of the Temple. He was his mother's first-born and darling, his father's spoiled "scholar" and pride, the pet of his teachers.

Two eminent Jews, Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, and Franz Boas, the great anthropologist, are the subjects of two recently published biographies which STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN considers here. In both men Mr. Hyman discerns, under their surface of modernity, secularism, and science, the ancient lineaments of the Jewish rabbi (in a secular revision), dispensing wisdom to disciples and calling down anathema on rebels: Freud "the Vienna Gaon," and Boas "the Tsaddik of Morningside Heights." Mr. Hyman writes frequently for the literary quarterlies, is on the staff of the *New Yorker*, and teaches at Bennington College. Last month we published his review of *Israel's History in Coins*, by A. Reifenberg.

**The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud: Volume I*, by Ernest Jones (Basic Books, 427 pp., $6.75); and *Franz Boas*, by Melville J. Herskovits (Scribner's, 131 pp., $2.50).

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We know that he will be a little radical as a young man but will settle down, and that he will become a good husband and a loving and indulgent father, a passionate card-player, a great talker among his cronies. He is ambivalent about his Jewishness like a hundred semi-intellectuals we know: he dislikes Christianity without any corresponding Jewish faith, his friends are almost entirely Jewish, he is fascinated by Jewish ritual but mocks it all as superstition, he toys with conversion but is never serious, he has a burning ambition for success and fame and a corresponding contempt for ambitionless *goyim,* he is incredulous that any Gentile author (in this case George Eliot) could write about Jews and know those things "we speak of only among ourselves," he suffers from "*schnorrer* fantasies" (Freud's own term) about inheriting undeserved wealth, he identifies himself with Jewish heroism in history and legend ("I have often felt as if I had inherited all the passion of our ancestors when they defended their Temple"). We can be sure that this fellow will end up in B'nai B'rith, and he does. If we had been told that this Doctor Freud made a good living as a general practitioner, provided a first-class education for his children, and was never heard of outside the neighborhood, we would not have been surprised.

Jones has spared us few of Freud's failings and weaknesses. We see him twice nervously destroying all his papers, learn of his horror of blood and his curious resentment of music (entering a restaurant that had a band, he would cover his ears). His lifelong ambition (ungratified) was to have enough money to buy his wife a gold snake bangle. The story of Freud's misguided propagation of the use of cocaine (he thought it harmless) furnishes an incredible comic chapter (his later psychoanalytic discoveries could be discounted in Vienna as the latest nonsense from crazy Dr. Freud, the cocaine-pusher). Full use is made of the correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess, which has not yet appeared in English. Fliess was a smalltime German physician full of crazy theories about the periodicity of life; for half a dozen years just before the turn of the century Freud had toward Fliess what Jones calls a "really passionate relationship of dependence." So sentimental was Freud about this that he arranged for International Psychoanalytic Congresses many years afterwards to be held in one town after another where he had spent time with Fliess. Freud had migraine attacks and what he called "neurasthenia" for most of his life, he was childishly superstitious, and for at least the decade of the 1890's his psychological ailments were serious enough for Jones to describe them as "a very considerable psychoneurosis" and "anxiety hysteria."

What is remarkable about this good Jewish bourgeois with his card games and his B'nai B'rith, this ambitious and erratic doctor with a horror of blood, what distinguishes him from the hundreds we know just like him, is the strength that came out of his weaknesses. If Freud foolishly identified himself with the Maccabees, he nevertheless showed himself fearless in every encounter with the anti-Semites. The card-playing somehow left him enough time to master Latin and Greek, French and English, Italian and Spanish, besides Hebrew, Yiddish, and German. Of a thoroughly pugnacious and dogmatic bent, he resolutely avoided controversy (even eliminating discussion of the papers delivered at psychoanalytic congresses). If his methods were naturally intuitive, he nevertheless made himself an expert technician, and did his own scientific drawings. For the man who opened up the Great Cloaca, he was personally reserved and rather puritanical, and in his own life quite prudish about sexual matters.

With all his psychic ailments, Freud met the severe physical pain of the jaw cancer that ended his life with absolute stoicism; "Most uncalled-for" was the one complaint Jones heard him utter in three decades of close association. Out of the absurd Fliess relationship came unsparing self-awareness ("There is some piece of unruly homosexual feeling at the root of the matter," Freud told Jones) and the first self-analysis in history,

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beginning in 1897 and continuing for half an hour a day all of Freud's life, which produced not only "the serene and benign Freud" of later years but a therapeutic method of general application. Most of the great discoveries came out of Freud's suffering and failures: he deduced the Oedipus Complex from his own feelings; wrote *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a reaction to "the most poignant loss in a man's life," his father's death; developed analytic techniques from difficulties with his patients; and inaugurated free association out of his humility about interrupting a patient and breaking her flow of thought.

FRANZ BOAS is more of a problem for us. He appears in the first paragraph of Herskovits's book as an unidentified "young physicist-geographer" on shipboard, and he remains similarly remote throughout the book. Boas must have been rather a cold fish. He was a Jew by ancestry, but his culture and loyalties were German, and he seems to have put his faith entirely in assimilation. The rise of Hitler apparently reminded Boas forcibly (as it did others similarly assimilated) of his Jewish identity: "as one of Jewish origin," Herskovits writes with more delicacy than grammar, "his many relatives in Germany were among the proscribed." Long before that, however, Boas had revealed one curious race prejudice, according to one of his most famous students (Herskovits nowhere mentions it), the belief that only Jews have a capacity for languages, and this prejudice seems to have confined his favorite students, who became the leaders of American anthropology, almost entirely to Jews.

A few personal characteristics appear in the book, most of them unattractive: a prudishness at least equal to Freud's (one of the theses Boas chose to defend for his degree was that "modern operetta is reprehensible from the standpoint of art and morality"); an extreme quarrelsomeness and a ferocious addiction to polemic; a general crustiness in all personal relations except those with devoted students, where he was fatherly, and with primitive peoples in the field, where he was genuinely humble. Like Freud, Boas seems to have been remarkably stoical about his facial cancer, and Goldenweiser reports visiting Boas in the hospital after an operation and finding him practicing Kwakiutl phonetics with the half of his mouth he was able to move.

Franz Boas gives no sense of Boas's discoveries and contributions as rooted in any personal needs or weakness, but the correlations are not hard to work out. The famous 1910 study of the changes in bodily form of the children of immigrants, showing how they became physically assimilated to the dominant population, was the work of a German Jewish immigrant who believed in assimilation and had children. As the founder of comparative linguistics, the originator of the concept of the "culture area" (although the term seems to belong to his student Clark Wissler), our most influential voice for cultural pluralism with its vision of "different ultimate and coexisting types of civilization" living in peace and mutual appreciation, one of the first students of acculturation, a lifelong warrior against any form of racism, Boas is clearly the exiled Jew writ large, but this is easy to overlook in the cold tonality of statistical method, anthropometry, and experimental verification.

Boas himself deliberately obscured it every chance he got, as when he explained his delight in Indian myths and tales, which he collected and translated with rare sensitivity, as a desire for "the best linguistic data," or "objective material which will stand the scrutiny of painstaking investigation." The pattern is one of extreme repression, and only on rare occasions, as in the public letter he wrote in 1924 protesting the suppression of the potlatch among the Kwakiutl as a step that would demoralize them culturally, did he put on record the passionate appreciation of the lifeways of primitive peoples that underlay his neutral concern with "cultural dynamics" and his statistical interest in "acculturation." Yet this passion shines through all his work I have

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read, and it makes *The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians* one of the imaginative triumphs of our century.

ACTUALLY, of course, it is an illusion that biography "gives us the person"; to learn that, we have only to read two biographies of the same man. The subject patterns himself one way in his work, the biographer patterns him another way in writing about him, we pattern him in our own fashion at every stage of the process. For many of us, the shape the lives of both Freud and Boas took is one it would be hard to deduce from either biography—that of the *secular rabbi,* the figure of moral authority filling the gap left in our private culture by the retreat of the religious leader. Being nasty to his bride about her family, Freud wrote, "They would have preferred you to marry an old Rabbi or Schochet," but Freud himself became more than that, really, before his death. He became a great wonder-working rabbi after the ancient fashion, perhaps the Vienna Gaon himself. Most of this transformation occurs after 1900, when the sacred texts and commentaries appeared, and is not covered in this first volume of the Jones biography, but we can see the pattern taking shape: the followers beginning to gather around, addressing him simply as "*Herr* Professor"; the religious concern with the physical spot (the table in the northeast corner of the terrace of the Bellevue restaurant) where the Master analyzed his first dream; the early splits and schisms that mark rebellious disciples going off to found rival centers of learning, or, as in the case of Breuer, the supplanted and rejected older leader. And if Freud is the great Gaon of Vienna, Boas is surely the Tsaddik of Morningside Heights, the "Papa Franz" who used to strike his students, leading his Talmudic disputations on one topic a year at the graduate seminars, preserving in perpetuity the roles of master and disciple (for someone who apparently chafed under this, Herskovits describes the problem with great tact and fairness: "It is difficult to know whether he ever fully granted, in his unconscious reactions, that an associate who had once been a student no longer held this relationship to him").

Milton Himmelfarb wrote in last August's COMMENTARY: "In classical Jewish tradition a rabbi's authority is personal, in proportion to his reputation for learning and piety. Maimonides and Elijah Gaon of Vilna were not appointed to their authority; it grew out of a general recognition of their moral and intellectual eminence." In our day, this is precisely the process that has produced the figure of the secular rabbi. It is a characteristically Jewish process—we think of Freud and Boas, Einstein, even Marx—but not exclusively so: Emerson, Dewey, Burke, have all been American secular rabbis in this sense, expounding varieties of scripture to rapt disciples. In any earlier culture, these would be the tribe's Holy Men, its priests and saints; we may be the first civilization to have divorced wisdom from piety. And what is it that turns an ambitious young Austrian doctor or an arrogant young German geographer into this saintly figure, transforms all his flaws and weaknesses into blessings, makes him the repository for all the tribal wisdom and, ultimately, so *unlike* the rest of us? On this point, neither biographer has much to enlighten us. Perhaps, as Ernest Jones says with unconscious humor, "The answer to this question we must leave to the psychoanalysts."

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PEPPER AND SALT

A Story

IRWIN STARK

BECAUSE he had chosen to live within walking distance of his jewelry store my father was a DP. This was in the Coolidge era when even the West Bronx contained its saving remnant, but in our diaspora of neat private houses, gray brick apartment buildings, and vast stretches of weedy lots, communion was a rare event. A chance encounter in the street, a casual chat on a park bench and a brief *sholom*—these were too uncertain to be institutionalized. The nearest synagogue lay a good mile to the east, and except for Mr. Katz, who cleaned, pressed, and altered in the taxpayer around the corner, my father knew nobody to whom he could talk man to man. As a result he was lonely and morose, a condition never more evident than on Sunday mornings when, insulated against everything but his memories, he would sit for hours reading and rereading the *Forward* in the front parlor.

On one such morning, however, as I sprawled on the floor examining the sports page of the *Home News,* the silence was rudely broken by a resounding whack on the arm of my father's chair. "Joey," he announced in a voice trembling with emotion, "I'm going to buy you a new suit!"

"Sure, Pa—" Unable to understand his excitement, I looked up quizzically. "I guess I need a new suit all right."

"Today—I'm going to buy it today!"

"But it's Sunday—how can you buy a suit on Sunday? And besides, I got a stickball game at ten o'clock."

"I'll give you stickball!" He put his paper aside and started for his hat and coat. "Come—we'll ride down to Stanton Street."

"But Pa—"

"Shah! No more questions!" He glowered over his glasses. "Put on your jacket and let's go."

In a few minutes and after a brief consultation with my mother we set out on our journey. Stanton Street, my father explained on the crosstown trolley, was on the Lower East Side.

"But why do we have to go to the East Side to buy a suit?"

"Where else can you buy a suit on Sunday? Anyhow, I was born on the East Side."

The *non sequitur* only diverted my curiosity.

"On Stanton Street?"

"No, no—on Eldridge, right next to the livery stable."

"What's a livery stable?"

"It's a—well, it's like a barn—a place for horses."

"That's where you were born, Pa?"

"I was born next door," he said with deliberate patience. "If we get finished in time, I'll show you the house."

The ride downtown went quickly. We took the first car and I stood in the front next to the motorman's compartment pretending it was I who controlled the train. I swung the brake wheel to the right as we screeched into stations and as we roared into the dark tunnel below 161st Street I swung it boldly to the left. The misty red and green lights of the winding cavern signaled to me alone.

IRWIN STARK, who is currently teaching narrative writing at City College, has published stories in *Antioch Review, Coronet, Esquire,* and numerous other periodicals. His most recent earlier contribution to COMMENTARY was "Jewish Work-Camp in Indianapolis," in the January 1952 issue. Mr. Stark was born in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1912, and is a graduate of the City College of New York.

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We soon emerged into the quiet Sunday morning of the East Side and immediately I was struck by the narrowness of everything. The streets, the tenements, and the distances, even the people themselves, seemed oddly small and warped. I remember how surprised I was to hear two black-bearded men arguing in Yiddish.

Once when we had passed a block of closed stores and covered outdoor stalls I stopped to point to a suit in a store window, but my father slapped my hand down and jerked me away.

"Idiot!" he said breathlessly. "Don't point! And for God's sake, keep your mouth shut!"

"But, Pa," I remonstrated, "that was just the kind of suit Mama wants us to get."

"So we'll get it. But in the right place and the right time. All I ask is you should trust your own father and keep your mouth shut! Is this too much to ask?"

We continued silently for another block until we reached a clothing store my father seemed to recognize. He paused for a moment, glanced at the window display, shook his head and started to move on. But we did not get far. Before we had taken half a dozen steps a cheerful voice was shouting after us, "Can I help you, my friend?"

We turned to confront a bald head and a gold-toothed smile in a rosy, clean-shaven face.

"No," my father said, "we were just looking."

The face placed a friendly hand on the lapel of my father's coat. "Mister," it said, "we got the biggest stock merchandise in the city of New York. You don't find what you want here, you don't find it nowhere else neither. So help me, my good man, you're using up for nothing your shoe leather."

My father brushed the hand away. "It's my shoe leather," he said.

"You look like a reasonable man," the face declared. "Come in and have a look. How can you go wrong just to see what we got?"

My father checked his watch. He shrugged. "Okay. I guess we can spare a few minutes, Joey."

Inside the dimly lighted store the rosy face turned us over to a young fellow with a complexion like melted wax. We were led to the rear where among the racks of clothing several other customers were being taken care of. One of the salesmen was an old white-bearded man with a black skullcap. He was trying a suit on a boy who had come in with his mother. The other salesman was a younger man who resembled the rosy face that had returned to its post at the door.

"For yourself or the boy?" our salesman asked.

"For the boy. Something in a tweed."

"Got just the thing," our man said, retreating farther to the rear.

Above the tall mirror on the back wall was a large sign bearing the black-lettered inscription: STRICTLY ONE PRICE. I was staring at it when my father whispered furtively, "And remember, please keep your mouth shut!"

"Just for size," our salesman said as he returned with a suit.

My father examined the material with a professional air. "A potato bag. If this is all you have, we're just wasting our time."

"Please, mister," the salesman entreated. "Please, just for size."

I tried on the jacket but my father refused to look at it. He was busy examining some suits on a nearby rack. In any case, the jacket was much too large for me. The salesman took it off and made another trip to the rear. He returned with three suits, all tweeds.

"How about these, my friend?"

My father considered them. He pouted skeptically as he sampled the material between thumb and forefinger. "Let's try them on," he directed.

I tried each of them in turn and each time my father grunted unhappily. He grunted loudest after the last one, though it was a beautiful pepper and salt and fitted me perfectly.

"The boy could make a model," the salesman commented, standing back a little to

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admire me. "You don't have to alter hardly a stitch. He could walk out with it this minute and nobody would know if it was custom-made or not."

"How does it feel?" my father asked doubtfully. I was about to reply but he cut me short. "Kind of tight, huh?" His hands pinched into my shoulders.

The salesman ran his fingers over my arms. "A perfect fit. You'll forgive me but custom-made couldn't be better."

"How much?" my father asked nonchalantly.

"They don't make suits like this any more," the salesman said, ignoring the question. "Take a look at these buttonholes. Hand-stitched every one. And such a cut! Believe me, my dear friend, you got here a suit with a capital S."

"How much?"

The salesman ran his hand along the lapels. He loved the suit. "It don't skimp any place. You got here every inch of material you pay for. Iron couldn't be stronger."

"How much?" my father repeated.

The salesman looked at the price tag on the trousers. He sighed. "With two pair pants it's a sacrifice for twelve ninety-nine."

My father gasped. Disbelief, scorn, and horror contorted his face. "Take it off, Joey, take it off right away!" he commanded.

I did as I was told. I stood there uncertainly, the jacket still in my hands.

"You want a cheaper line? Okay, mister, so I'll show you something cheaper." The salesman snatched the jacket and started for the rear.

"I want this line," my father said. "But twelve ninety-nine? You think I'm stuffed with money like a *gefilte fish*? I'll give you eight dollars straight. Not a penny more!"

"Mister," the salesman murmured pityingly while he fondled the jacket, "let me show you something." He exhibited the price tag but my father refused to look at it. "Fifteen ninety-nine," the salesman read aloud. "And we're offering it to you today for twelve ninety-nine cash on the line with two pair pants!"

My father was unimpressed. "Put on your coat," he said to me. "I can see we're just wasting our time."

The salesman dashed to a nearby table and opened a drawer from which he withdrew a thick batch of vouchers. He waved them furiously at my father. "You don't believe me? Okay—look at the wholesale price. Seven twenty-five! And you got the nerve yet to offer seventy-five cents more! You don't believe in the profit system? Overhead you never heard of? You think we buy from slave labor?"

"Eight dollars," my father said. "That's my price."

The salesman looked up at the ceiling. "I shouldn't live to go home to my wife! My children should only go hungry and without shoes! Seventy-five cents profit? It should happen to Haman!" His face was turning from salmon pink to a hot and flushy red. He ran his hand through his hair and began to address the ceiling in Yiddish.

Suddenly I found myself staring at the sign above the mirror. I realized my father's awful mistake. I felt sick to my stomach and ashamed for him. "Pa—" I called.

"Shut up!" he said. We moved together toward the door. I was trembling with embarrassment.

"Mister Kay!" the salesman cried. His voice sounded a note of desperation.

The old man in the skullcap turned abruptly and shuffled across the floor. His small red mouth was smiling as he stroked his beard and placed himself between us and the door. "So—?" he inquired calmly.

"The gentleman wants the suit," our salesman explained. "So I quote him our price—twelve ninety-nine."

The old man nodded. His eyes fastened tenaciously on the disputed garment. "Twelve ninety-nine—yes?"

"He wants it—for eight dollars he wants it!" He paused dramatically. "Blood he wants!" Tossing the suit to the man in the skullcap, he strode away with unconcealed indignation.

"My good friend," the old man said re-

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proachfully to my father, "you must be making a joke."

"Jokes are for the rich," my father replied. "Eight dollars is all I can afford."

"But do you have any idea what kind garment this is, my friend?" The old man stroked the suit tenderly. I marveled at his patience.

"I know my own pocketbook. Eight dollars."

"Not for this suit. Better we should starve." His voice almost broke with emotion. "Yes—much better."

"Come on, Joey," my father said.

For an instant I was so appalled by my father's callousness that I could not move. My impulse was to turn to the old man and beg him to forgive us. Surely my father had not observed the sign above the mirror.

"Joey!"

"Wait," the old man said. "I'll tell you what we do." He gazed around cautiously, then whispered, "I want to make a customer. Let me have ten ninety-nine and the difference you can give to charity."

"Eight," my father said. "I'll give the difference to myself. That's a real charity."

The old man chuckled, he wet his lips, his shoulders rose and fell. "You're a hard man. Nine ninety-nine. That's the best I can do."

My father smiled. "Try it on again, Joey," he said.

Bewildered, I did as I was told, going behind a curtain to put on the trousers. When I came out, the store tailor was waiting for me. A small fat man with pins sticking out of his mouth, he looked me over with a practiced eye, felt under the armpits, measured the length of the sleeves, and tested the waist and the crotch. It was a perfect fit. Because we did not wish to wait, Mr. Katz, my father decided, would take care of the cuffs. The suit was therefore wrapped, my father paid the nine ninety-nine and the old man with the skullcap thanked us effusively as he returned the penny in change. I could not understand how he could have forgiven my father so easily.

As we walked down the street my father was in high spirits. He held my hand firmly and whistled a lively tune. "Now I'll show you where I was born," he said happily.

At the corner I stopped to look into the window of another clothing store. Something familiar had caught my eye.

"What is it, Joey?"

"That suit—it's the exact same suit we just bought!"

My father frowned. He adjusted his glasses and peered at the pepper and salt displayed on the manikin in the window. The price tag read: SALE $9.49.

All at once he began to laugh. He ran his hand through my hair and laughed out loud. "How can it be the same suit? I ask you—how can it possibly be the same? Yes—and even if it is—even if it is—?"

I don't think I knew what he meant, but somehow we marched joyfully in the direction of Eldridge Street.

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THE SUCCESS OF FAITH

Or Is It the Faith of Success?

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

EVERY period has an ideal—and a scapegoat which it holds responsible for the failure to attain its ideal. In the 30's, the ideal was the equalitarian society, the scapegoats those who failed to keep in step with history. More recently, however, the ideal has become the open, democratic society, not much different from what we already have, with a maximum of good and a minimum of evil, but to be worked towards very cautiously lest the whole status quo be upset. This prospect draws heavily on common sense, moderateness, and plain fear. But it is not very inspiring, and it generates all kinds of social hypochondria. After all, to watch one's step and protect one's social health is less exciting than making a revolution. Hence it requires a new kind of energy, derived from a new faith, to take the place of political zealotry.

This is one reason why, it seems to me, we have been hearing so much lately about the need for greater faith and spirituality, and why there are so many complaints about the moral failure of our time. If our ideal today is a good society without radical change, our scapegoat has become loss of faith—faith in ourselves, our fellow men, and God. Of course, we have been living through some kind of moral letdown, but where in the past morality was thought to be socially determined, today it is taken to be a force in its own right.

And now that history has proved to be unreliable, God has been restored once more to his proper place as the source of all good. The swing has been marked also by an emphasis on moral absolutes, on the tragic view of man's plight, and on the sacredness of the individual, however tortured and irrational his existence. At the same time, the historical view of man and, generally, all forms of naturalist thinking have been under wholesale attack. Those who take an empirical approach to man and society have felt that this swing has gone too far towards obscurantism; still, many empiricists have welcomed the turn as at least a corrective to the breezy view of progress that had prevailed in psychology, education, science, and philosophy, as well as politics.

FAITH, religious and moral, has traditionally been important in American life and culture, but today it is big business, as can be seen from the enormous audience—39,000,000—the radio program "This I Believe" enjoys, in which all kinds of prominent people state the faiths they believe in. Some of these declarations have been got together in a book, *This I Believe* (Simon and Schuster, 200 pp., cloth $3.00, paper $1.00) and WILLIAM PHILLIPS here examines them for the kind of values they indicate as enjoying high sanction in America today. Mr. Phillips is co-editor of *Partisan Review*, and appeared most recently in this magazine with "A French Lady on the Dark Continent" (July 1953), a review of Simone de Beauvoir's *America Day by Day*.

I SUPPOSE it is inevitable in the era of mass media that even religious belief should be streamlined and packaged for mass distribution. After all, even good things can yield profits, and, besides, who is to say that an ounce of good is worse than none at all? So, just as there is someone like T. S. Eliot arguing for a homogeneous society and for traditional religion, there are also attempts to "popularize" religion in newspapers and over the radio—to make faith attractive and easy to take. So popular has one such effort been—the radio program "This I Believe"—that a selection from it has just been published in book form, presumably for those

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who prefer their philosophy between hard covers.

The "success" of the radio program itself can be gauged from the following figures taken from the foreword to the book. The program is "broadcast in the United States 2,200 separate times each week from 196 of the most powerful radio stations. It reaches 39,000,000 people in this country alone—on an average of twice a week. This makes it the most listened to radio program in the world. It is broadcast 900 times a week on 150 stations abroad, and over the Voice of America weekly in six languages. It reaches our men and women of the armed forces in Korea, in Germany, and around the world daily." All this is over the air alone. On top of this, "newspapers in this country carry 'This I Believe' some 8,500,000 times weekly—it appears once a week in 85 leading dailies." If only a Moses, a Jesus, or a Mahomet had had such facilities at his disposal!

This project has been inspired and conducted by Edward R. Murrow, an able and respected journalist. But, so far as I know, he has never distinguished himself in theology, philosophy, or any branch of moral inquiry. In his foreword to the book, he indicates that his main concern is with the survival of democracy and with our social welfare generally. He feels that the publication of these spiritual messages will help both to preserve private belief and invigorate our faith in our social institutions. Obviously, the purpose of the venture is mixed: on the one hand, its aim is to spread some vague kind of religiousness; on the other, to combat what Mr. Murrow feels is a growing trend toward conformity and repression of opinion in this country. This confusion is apparent in Mr. Murrow's statement of aims: "We . . . live in a society that is materialistic and mechanistic, where most of the goods we use are mass produced. We employ the same phrases, buy nationally advertised products, wear nationally branded hats and suits; the majority of newspaper editors have abdicated to the syndicated columns. The voice of one broadcaster is heard from one end of the country to the other. There exists a real danger that the right to dissent, the right to be wrong may be swamped because the instruments of communication are too closely held."

This sounds like a blend of primitive religiosity and liberal muckraking. Not that a theologian cannot be a liberal, or a liberal believe in God. But generally the two are not identical, at least not on their deepest levels. It seems to me that what Mr. Murrow is doing is carrying over liberal sentiment—as distinct from basic liberal doctrine—seasoned with some folksiness, into the area of faith. The result is a mixture of religious and political platitudes, all adding up to the conclusion that we must live and let live, love our neighbors as ourselves, and consult a psychiatrist if we by chance dislike ourselves.

Who are the hundred chosen people whose messages this book gathers together in order to inspire the rest of us? With a few exceptions, the contributors have respectable or glamorous reputations; but only a handful, like Thomas Mann and Aldous Huxley, are really distinguished in their fields. They include businessmen, educators, writers, athletes, politicians, actors, journalists, movie directors, judges, generals, musicians, and a few people like Helen Keller, the household symbol of the power of mind over matter, and Lucy Freeman, the Horatio Alger of the psychic life. All the confessions of faith are short, and most of them have the vague precision of good advertising copy.

And what do they tell us? On the whole, we are constantly reminded of the virtues of truth, equality, progress, freedom, happiness, social welfare, justice, intelligence, reason, honesty, character, conscience, unselfishness, love, good citizenship, individuality, team spirit, democracy, devotion to one's country. We are warned, however, against such things as evil, lack of faith in humanity, repression of opinion, inferiority complexes, and we are reminded that the heart is generally more reliable than the head. Most of the contributors confess rather modestly to a lifelong struggle to help both themselves and their fellow men simultaneously,

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while admitting to a few lapses in the past, usually in their childhood, or anyway before reaching moral maturity.

In this patter of moralizing, several themes stand out. The principal one is the idea of success, which is sometimes spelled out, but is generally assumed to be connected with true faith and the good life. The choice of contributors reflects this attitude; all of them are people who count in their fields, respectable, hard-working pillars of society. There are no cranks, rebels, saints, people against the grain, who are often not successful during their lifetime and occasionally not even afterwards, at least not by *Who's Who* standards.

Obviously, all this has more to do with the market place and with current notions of power and achievement than with faith or religion in any form. Genuine faith has usually been unworldly, private, and lonely. In more secular areas, the man of faith might believe in an unpopular idea, or cause, or in his own gifts in one of the arts, and for a time run against the stream—in which case he might not even rate a radio or TV appearance, and God only knows how he could ever have got into *This I Believe.*

ANOTHER theme is "adjustment." By some simple shift of gears, many of the contributors to the book move from the idea of faith in humanity to that of living with one's fellows, which in turn involves some sort of adjustment to them. Now I should make clear that I am all for adjustment though I am not always sure just what it means. But the notion of adapting oneself to one's community and getting along with one's neighbors, which presumably comes from popularized psychoanalysis and psychiatry, is a far cry from Freud's tragic picture of man, with his burden of guilt and sin, and his lifelong struggle to marshal the forces of good against those of evil within himself. Nor, for that matter, is the idea of adjustment to society—or even to oneself—the same thing as faith, religious purpose, or the moral life.

The book is loaded with all the passwords to the Hall of Fame, all the slogans of an alumni dinner for a winning football team. "Babe" Pinelli, the veteran umpire, says, "I believe in my God, my family, my country and baseball." Nat Holman, the basketball coach, under the heading "You Cannot Fix a Real Faith," says "winning is not enough. The game must be played right." Joe Williams, who I happen to think is a good sports writer when he sticks to sports, here tells us he believes in God, country, decency, and the shortstop who makes errors because he is thinking only of his team. And so on. Some of the more highbrow contributors say much the same thing in the jargon of social consciousness. Elmer Davis believes in decency, freedom, and the team spirit of humanity, which he sees as progress. William Zorach, the sculptor, quotes at length from Longfellow's verses about life being real and earnest.

There are, of course, a few pieces that rise above the generalities of good and evil, mainly by people who are serious in their own fields and know the difference between a statement of faith and an after-dinner speech. Robert Hillyer, for example, seems to describe himself honestly, in a way that takes account of the strength and power of evil. Thomas Mann, though a little pompous, at least disassociates himself from the timeless platitudes of the good life when he argues for an awareness of the transitory and the ambiguous. Also the comments by Margaret Mead, Saul Padover, C. Day Lewis, and Harold Taylor stand out from the rest and sound as though they had been thought about rather than fabricated for the occasion.

IT SHOULD be clear that the whole problem of faith or morality in our time is not a subject for polling. If you ask a business executive or a taxi driver or a mediocre but successful artist to make a public pronouncement on what he believes, he is bound to furnish you with some old wives' tale about how he has fought the temptations of evil in himself and in others and how his whole life is dedicated to the good, the true, and the beautiful. Ten or twenty years ago he might have parroted platitudes about social justice;

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now he proclaims the moral and psychological platitudes of the day.

Morality has become the last refuge of our time. But morality, like theology or social thinking, must either be intellectually searching, or concrete and practical. For most of the contributors to *This I Believe* it is neither. Their professions of belief in God are perfunctory, lacking the agonies of doubt or the awareness of evil that we expect of deeply felt religion. Their religion is the religion of respectable opinion. And most of the expressions of social conscience simply echo the present concern over civil liberties. Of course, civil liberties are basic to any social morality. But more than pep-talks about democracy by celebrities from the entertainment world, what we obviously need are serious and specific analyses of the forces threatening our civil liberties and the means of combating them. One feels, too, that this question, important as it is, has become for many of the contributors a means of forgetting about all other social problems.

Few show much awareness of the actual moral choices we face today, both individually and socially. But this is not surprising; what is surprising is that some of the pieces in the collection should make sense. How could anyone write anything of value for a project in which faith is treated on the level of public relations, and what a person says is only so much additional copy for the publicity surrounding his name?

ON A HASIDIC THEME

MICHEL LICHT

For my aunt Pesye-Chana and my uncle Shaye-Yidl

The Rebbe Reb Dovidl dwelt in Talne,
Now he abides in Rachmistrivke.
Currently I reside in New York
Although I hail from Moskalivke.
It's quite a distance from New York to Talne
'Twixt the Rebbe and me—a remoteness more immense:
Whilst I revel in profane dancing and singing
He rejoices in God with ritual chant and dance.
And as the devout retinue at Talne
Bewails his leaving for Rachmistrivke
So too bemoan my departure for New York
My desolate kin in Moskalivke.
And the pining of kinsfolk, the lament of Hasidim,
The longing of Talne and Moskalivke,
Redeems my vain New York existence,
Exults Reb Dovidl in Rachmistrivke.
And though it were blasphemous to compare
Our Fates' diversely chartered courses,
The mere change of abodes has caused the commingling
Of longing and hope at Life's very sources.
And thus are in sweet sorrow joined
The heartbeats 'tween New York and Moskalivke
As the tender anguish of Talne is entwined with
The jubilant spirit of Rachmistrivke.

Michel Licht, who emigrated to this country from Russia in 1913, at the age of twenty, held a unique place among Yiddish poets here. He followed the American avant-garde literary movement of the 20's with a passionate interest, attempting to incorporate some of its innovations into Yiddish writing. His numerous translations from other literatures into the Yiddish included poems of T. S. Eliot and Marianne Moore, and James Branch Cabell's *Jurgen*. Mr. Licht also wrote in English, and the poem we print here is his own translation of one of his best-known Yiddish lyrics. He died last June.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

PAWNBROKER ON EIGHTH AVENUE

A Portrait

DONALD PANETH

IRVING BERG, who lives in Great Neck, Long Island, drives his son and daughter to school each weekday morning, and then continues on to the railroad plaza, where he parks his car, buys the *Times*, and takes the 8:47 to New York. He usually finds an empty seat, and for the next thirty-five minutes, as the suburban train starts and stops on its way to the city, scans his newspaper or chats with an acquaintance. At Pennsylvania Station he hurries up the steps and through the crowds to the street.

Then he takes a bus to Eighth Avenue and 55th Street, a shabby neighborhood of small bars, narrow tenements, crowded garages, and littered streets, where his pawnshop is located. He crosses the street, enters the store which one of his two employees has already opened, and goes to his old roll-top desk in the rear of the shop. At his desk, he talks briefly with Murray, his manager, finishes his newspaper, checks his cash-on-hand, and reads his mail: letters and interest payments, advertising circulars and police notices. A short while later, after the first troubled, distracted patrons have appeared and departed, he goes next door to a luncheonette for a breakfast of cereal, toast, and tea.

Berg, a short, nattily dressed, middle-aged man, has worked behind the counter of a pawnshop since he was a youth. "It's a very good business," he says. "It's not seasonal, and you can't suddenly lose everything. It's not a business where you can get hurt; people loan and redeem all the time." Berg's shop is open six days a week from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., and patronized by a wide variety of city dwellers. Throughout the day he makes loans, records interest payments, redeems pawned articles, and sells a potpourri of merchandise with solicitous care. He is an expert on the loan value, that is, the resale value, of watches, diamonds, gold rings, cameras, violins, luggage, suits, overcoats, furs, antiques—and tears or frenzy don't move him. "In this business," he says, "you can't be a softie. You wouldn't last."

Berg is shrewd, direct, poker-faced, and suspicious. Though he is courteous, and on occasion sentimental, he doesn't cash checks, tests all precious stones and metals for genuineness, and is watchful for stolen goods and the artifices of patrons. He automatically compares each patron with the article being pawned, and if they don't seem to correspond asks for identification. (He also carries a $200,000 Lloyd's of London insurance policy against fire, theft, and holdup.) "There are people who sit up nights figuring ways to put it over on the pawnbroker," he says with some dismay. "They try to pawn diamonds that aren't diamonds, or they go into a Credit Jeweler's, put $1 down on a $75 value, and then hock it for $10, or they

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IN THIS latest of the sketches of New York life which DONALD PANETH has contributed to COMMENTARY, he draws a portrait of one of those necessary, useful, and often misunderstood functionaries in the financial life of the great city: a pawnbroker. Mr. Paneth, born in New York in 1927 and educated at City College and Columbia University, was for a number of years a reporter on the New York *Times* and is now working on a book about the city. The most recent of his past contributions to our pages was "McCaffrey's Bar and Grill," published in July of last year.

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try to disguise a hole in a suit jacket with a black arm band. Some people are really thieves. They come in when we're busy, pull the tag off a suit on the rack, and try to hock it. Or they say, 'I just want to see what color it is outside,' and fly around the corner with it. Anyway, I'm very careful."

A NEON sign, IRVING BERG, LOAN BROKERS, and three gold balls, the traditional symbol of the pawnbroker, are above the entrance of his store. Orange and black signs on each side say: SALE, $3.95 UP, FAMOUS NAME BRAND SUITS, SPORT JACKETS, TOP COATS, O'COATS. The shop's double windows have iron bars directly behind them. Shoes, boxing gloves, trombones, cutlery, shotguns, microscopes, fishing rods are in one window, and violins, bric-a-brac, jewelry, and oil paintings in the other. Next to each article is a small descriptive card, which may characterize it as, "Very Fine Value," or "Collector's Item," or "Excellent Tone," or "Made by Tiffany." The shop within is long, narrow, and cluttered. It is brightly lit, but on all sides are counters and wooden bins and clothing racks and shelves, filled with more merchandise and casting big gloomy shadows. The back of the shop, where Berg's desk, jewelry vault, and storeroom are located, is partitioned off by iron grillwork.

Thirty or forty people a day pawn articles with Berg, and on an average day he loans them about $800, in small amounts between $10 and $25. "I don't like to make big loans," he says. "I'd rather loan $100 to ten people than to one person—the higher the number of pledges, the greater the turnover and the interest." Trade is particularly brisk each day between 9 and 10 A.M., noon and 1 P.M., and 5 and 6 P.M. "There are always a few people," Berg explains, "waiting for you to open. Usually, they need money to get to work. Then, at twelve o'clock, we get business from the people who go out to lunch; they want money to bet on a horse, and they pawn personal items such as tie clasps or fountain pens. At five o'clock, the people who have a dinner appointment or lost their bets come in." Of the days in the week, Friday is consistently the busiest in the shop. "It used to be Saturday," Berg says, "but most people get paid on Friday now, and redeem their clothing so they can wear it over the weekend. They bring it back and pawn it again on Monday morning. They bring in a new suit, maybe, and I loan them $11 or $12; then, in a month, I cut it down to $10 or $11, and so forth. If they put up a fuss, I explain to them, 'Well, you're wearing the suit out.'"

His diverse patrons comprise the poor and the well-to-do, the obscure and the notable, the transient and the regular. They include longshoremen from Tenth Avenue, young boxers from Stillman's Gymnasium, music students from Carnegie Hall, lodgers from nearby rooming houses, rodeo contestants from Madison Square Garden, and entertainers from Broadway night clubs. "There are always new faces," he says. "We get a lot of transient trade from the hotels and furnished rooms; six months later, I receive a money order from a Fleet address or California or out of the country. We're a block from Stillman's Gym, and I find managers bringing in youngsters from all over the United States. They don't have too much money, and they come in and start pawning the watches they won as amateurs so they can get a room. Then, they have one or two fights and they're not doing too well and they pawn their outfits—skipping rope, gloves, and headgear. They usually don't redeem them. Now the Puerto Ricans are coming in and living on Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh Avenue. They have very little, and they become porters or bus boys or go on relief. A St. Christopher medal is the first thing they'll buy and the first thing they'll pawn. I also do a lot of business with theatrical people. They love to live high, and they don't work too steadily unless they're top. I've had some very well-known entertainers pawn with me; I can't disclose their names, but the public would be surprised. I get a better class of trade too—from the hotels in the vicinity, the Pierre, St. Moritz, Hampshire House, Park Sheraton, and from the apartment houses on Central Park West. It happens in the best of families. Maybe they have to raise a bail bond, or maybe they're living on an income, have been entertaining a little too freely, and need some money until their monthly check arrives. They pawn some very lovely jewelry."

Berg has many steady patrons who won't trade elsewhere. "They get used to the same shop," he explains, "and feel comfortable in it. I have a press agent, for instance, who

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pawns his pants twice a week, and a TV actor who leaves his tuxedo with me except when he needs it for a scene; the actor pays $25 a week alimony. I've known one woman twenty years. She was formerly a silent movie actress, and she still gets letters from Cecil B. De Mille, which I have seen myself. She's in her early fifties now, and occasionally gets bit parts in Broadway shows. When things get tough for her, she pawns a little diamond ring and pin. I've got one guy who works for an express company, and drinks; once a week, at the end of the week, he pawns a nail clipper and a scissors for $1. Another guy I've known twelve years. He runs around with women, and never has enough money; he pawns his golf clubs, a very expensive set, and his wife's jewelry. I've been seeing a lot of him lately."

He works snappily behind the counter. "The person needs money," he says. "And he wants that money, he doesn't want to chat with you. We try to get him in and out fast." He shrewdly adapts his manner to each person with whom he deals: he is friendly with the regular, good-natured with the alcoholic, ingratiating with the well-to-do, benevolent with the Negro or Puerto Rican. "I treat everybody like a lady or gentleman," he says, "if they're sincere and don't try to put anything over on me. I make them feel right at home, and explain to them that it's strictly business. I explain that they can redeem their article today, tomorrow, or a year from today. Of course, we have the cocky type: whatever he asks I should give him. There's always a little argument with this type, but I take him off his perch immediately. 'If you can't act like a gentleman, we won't do business with you.' Then we have the meek type. They come in very slowly, very quietly, and stand at the counter. They're ashamed, and afraid you'll get angry with them. 'Is this a pawnshop?' they'll say." Through a name for courtesy, Berg has tried to attract the well-to-do and well-known to his shop. "The better class of trade," he says; adding, "Well, it's nice to do business with nice people. They're more understanding. Not that I don't want to do business with the other type, they're my livelihood."

BERG is a short, stocky man, fifty years old. His face is clean-shaven and bland, with thin lips, a fleshy nose, and alert eyes; he has wavy gray hair, and from his cheekbones two deep creases extend gravely past his mouth to his jaw-line. He wears well-tailored double-breasted blue or brown suits with matching silk ties, monogrammed white shirts, and a white handkerchief in his breast pocket. He is energetic, self-confident, and assertive—but nonetheless somewhat sensitive about his dignity, about being a pawnbroker. He feels that many people don't regard pawnbroking as a respectable business. "They think every broker is a Shylock," he says. "Hunched over, with a little beard and a skullcap. The Jew Moneylender. But that's out of the Middle Ages, when pawnbrokinig was almost the only business a Jew could be in."

Customers are constantly in the shop. A gaunt, shabbily dressed man pawns his overcoat. A couple enters, and inquires about a trunk. "You can have this one for $25," Berg says. "A steamer trunk. It's in very good condition; it'll never wear out." A theatrical prop man appears, looking for an old top hat and monocle. A young man in a leather jacket pawns a watch. "How much you want?" Berg says. "Seven," the young man says, as Berg looks at the watch. "Five," Berg says. "You gave me $7 a month ago." "I know, we're cutting down on all loans." "O.K. Give it to me." A tall Negro redeems a bicycle, rides it around the block, and then repawns it. A drunk, frowzy woman tries to induce Berg to take in pawn her canary and bird cage. "Just for a week," she says. Another patron tries on a suit. "If you had it made to order," Berg says, "it wouldn't fit you any better. A beautiful fitting suit. I'm not kidding you." "If you can let this go for $15, buddy, it's a sale." "Tell you what I'll do," Berg says. "I'll give it to you for $18."

Berg and Murray, his manager, a short, reserved, pipe-smoking man who has worked for him twelve years, wait on trade; another employee, Ray, is stock clerk. "Berg likes to handle the pledging himself," Murray says. "And he likes the place to be efficient and clean. Sometimes he flares up and says something. 'What'dya let the customer out for?' He feels he might have made the sale if we'd turned him over." Most of Berg's patrons need money quickly, often desperately, to pay rent, or buy food, or pay a bill. And his interest rates, though fixed by New York State, are correspondingly high: 3 per

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cent (per month) on $1 to $100 for the first six months, and 2 per cent for the following six; over $100, the rate is 2 and 1 per cent respectively. "It may sound a little exorbitant," Berg says, "but it's not. There's the upkeep of the business, and it's the same rate as seventy years ago." The amount of the loan he makes, however, is fixed by habit and tradition, not law. For example, he usually lends 50 cents to $3 on an alarm clock, $2 to $8 on a drafting set, $5 to $15 on an overcoat, $10 to $35 on a violin, $20 to $50 on a rifle, $50 to $200 on a fur coat. Occasionally, his loans are larger: $150 on a Leica camera or $300 on an old, rare violin or $800 on a diamond clip. "We keep it down," he acknowledges. "There are so many different opinions as to value—and we want to get our money back if it's not redeemed. Sometimes, if a person really seems to need the money I loan a little more. I once had a fella come in with his wife's fur coat. I offered him a loan of $90, and he told me he needed $125 for a hospital bill. I said no. But he started pleading, and I noticed tears come to his eyes. Then I began to weaken, and ask him questions, and he takes out the bill. Well, I loaned him $125. That was three years ago, and he's still paying interest on the coat; he hasn't been able to take it out yet. So I helped a fella out, and I'm getting a return on my money."

Gold and silver rings, diamonds, violins, and objects of art are the most difficult articles upon which to fix a loan value. And Berg is extremely cautious when accepting them in pawn. He carefully tests all rings and diamonds. "I can judge by the weight of a ring if it's gold or gold-filled," he says. "I get a feel in my finger tips. But I don't allow my men to do this, I insist that they test it. Filing it a little in an inconspicuous place, and putting on an acid; if the acid turns green it proves the article is brass." Determining the value and genuineness of diamonds is more complicated. Berg goes over each diamond with a Diamond Point Pencil (it will scratch glass or sapphire but not another diamond) and measures its circumference and depth with a precision gauge. He chiefly encounters diamonds of three grades: brown, the cheapest, yellow, mediocre, and blue-white, valuable. "Some people," he says, "try to color a yellow diamond with an indelible pencil. Give it a 'Silver Cape,' a bright color. The only way to discover that is to wash a diamond with alcohol, which removes the indelible film. We wash practically every diamond with alcohol. Then we have a doublet-diamond—the top is diamond and the bottom is zircon, the nearest and hardest thing to a diamond. If you look into the center of that diamond, it's dead, it has no life." Unlike many other pawnbrokers, Berg is also familiar with the characteristics—and approximate value—of violins and objects of art. "A pawnshop takes in an awful lot of violins," he says. "We get quite a few from students at Carnegie Hall who either run short or quit. Now I'm no expert, I don't know the real value of a fiddle—a Strad or Guarnieri—but I know what to look for. How beautiful the stain is. Whether it's a healthy fiddle, cracked or repaired. How fine the scroll's been done." Similarly, he accepts china, bric-a-brac, and antiques in pawn. "Venetian glassware," he says, "Italian china, Royal Copenhagen china, Meissen and Dresden figures. As long as I can remember, I've loved anything old."

He records each loan in a ledger, on descriptive cards, and on the pawn ticket, which is small, pink and white, and oblong. "THIS TICKET GOOD FOR ONE YEAR ONLY," it says. "This Ticket may be renewed by paying the interest due." Each evening the descriptive cards are mailed to the Police Department, which checks them for stolen goods; Berg in turn receives daily lists of stolen goods from the police. "Every pawnshop gets a few characters with stolen goods," he says. "But I don't try to compete with the Police Department. If I think an article's stolen, I say, 'Do you mind if I check this?' I give the guy a chance to go, and he runs out of the store. This happens a dozen times a year, but as long as I'm behind the grill I don't get nervous." Many of the articles which are legitimately pawned are eventually redeemed, while the remainder are sold at auction or by Berg himself. "There are some people," he says, "who wouldn't think of shopping anywhere else. But we also get a lot of celebrities. I sold Joe Howard a diamond ring in '43 or '44. And Kid Gavilan. I sold him a guitar. I paid special attention to his hands. I have a small hand, but his hand was smaller than mine. It made you wonder where he gets all the power from."

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IRVING BERG was born in London on March 1, 1904. His mother, Anna, and his father, Barnet, had come to England from Warsaw three years earlier. Berg was the second of three children; he had an older brother, William, and a younger sister, Molly. His father was a baker. "He was a short, dark-haired, hard-working, nervous man, who loved to play dominoes. My mother was religious, independent, and even-tempered; nothing interested her except her family. We lived on Coke Street in the East End, and I can remember some very hard times, when my father wasn't working and we only had a fireplace to keep warm and cook at. Then my uncles helped us. I also can remember my mother giving me a halfpenny for fish and chips in a paper cone and my brother and I getting lost following a parade on London Bridge."

When he was four years old he came to the United States with his family. His father got a job as a bread baker, and they lived on the East Side between Second and Third Avenue; another sister, Lillian, was born, but she died of scarlet fever at the age of two. After her death, his family moved uptown. "We lived in about seven apartments, on 100th, 103rd, 104th Street," Berg recalls. "We weren't Gypsies, but we'd get two or three months' concession and then move. We started from the bottom like most immigrants, but we always had a bed in the house and a couch in the living room. We used to buy things on time from customers' men who came around; for years and years we'd be paying them off, 25 cents or 50 cents a week." Once a year he got a new pair of shoes and a new suit. "I was an average kid," he says. "I liked athletics, and I didn't like school. I wanted to get out and earn some money."

Berg went to work selling newspapers after school when he was eight. "I borrowed 10 cents from a neighbor," he says, "and bought two papers for one cent, and sold them for a penny a piece. Somebody would yell from a window, and I'd get two cents for bringing it up." When he left school at the age of twelve he went to work for the New York Athletic Club as a pin boy. "I loved that job," he says. "I made $15 or $20 a week, $2 or $3 in tips a night. Every night we had executives, politicians, judges—all big shots—bowling, and they'd roll quarters and fifty-cent pieces down the alleys. After eleven we'd take a swim in the pool and put lotion and cream on our hair—it was for nothing—and get a wonderful meal. That lasted eight months. I started playing cards, and got into a fist fight, and that was the end of it. I was canned." Then he went to work for an importer of lamps and bric-a-brac as a delivery boy. "I didn't like that job," he says. "They wanted a horse. But while I was there, I decided I wanted to become a businessman. I felt that was the way I could be a success. I loved to earn money and spend it. And I loved the idea of trading."

Subsequently he worked as a delivery boy for a tailor and then as a stock clerk in Ovington's; two years later, when he was fired for lateness, he got his first job in a pawnshop. He was seventeen years old. "A friend of my father's," he recalls, "was in the wholesale jewelry business. He specialized in selling to pawnshops, and he got me a job in a small place, three blocks from where I am now." Berg liked pawnbroking. "I was fascinated by it," he says. "So many things you could have: musical instruments, shotguns, fishing rods. I could play with it all. And being behind the counter—how would you say it?—with people coming to you to borrow money, I felt it was important of me. This was the business I wanted to learn."

BERG went to work in a pawnshop on Eighth Avenue. The proprietor, Kalman Radin, had been a pawnbroker for the past fifteen years. "He was the oldtype broker," Berg says. "His shop was dingy, and he was tough, no leeway on loans. He had a small business, and used to sleep most of the day in his chair." As stock clerk, Berg swept the floor, camphored and wrapped clothing, answered the inquiries of customers, and learned the loan value of merchandise; later he made small loans on his own.

In 1924, after Berg had been working in the shop three years, Radin died, and two brothers, Sol and Alex Gordon, became the new proprietors. "Alex Gordon was my ideal of a perfect broker," Berg says. "He knew the business, and was good-looking, intelligent, and suave. He was the front man. His brother, Sol, had come up the hard way, as a drummer, and belonged to the old school; he was the financial backer and quite shrewd. He knew diamonds—and you can make a

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fortune if you know diamonds, their value fluctuates so. During World War II, for instance, they went from $65 a carat to $300. Anyhow, Sol made the snowballs and Alex threw them. They built a fine shop. They got rid of the half-swinging doors at the entrance. They replaced the glass rings in the window with real diamonds and the belly-stove with a gas heater. And painted the shop.

"The 20's were lush years," he says. "There was lots of easy money around. Racketeers kept gals and bought jewelry and spent money. We were surrounded by speakeasies —every cellar was a speakeasy—and I saw the bootleggers, the strong-arm boys, the smart operators. I was a kid, and it fascinated me." Berg worked six days a week, and was eager, conscientious, and energetic; on Saturdays he worked to midnight. "My parents were surprised I kept the job," he says. "I had to give up Saturday night with the boys. But I didn't mind. I belonged to the 'Y,' and used to bowl twice a week and play poker once in a while. I wasn't a lady-killer; I didn't like to spend much money on them. After a while, I got to know merchandise pretty well, and became a counterman. I learned how to talk to people, and gradually built up a following: 'I'd like to see Irving.'"

He became manager of the shop in 1929, when he was twenty-five. About this time he decided he would ultimately like to go into business for himself—and simultaneously had a disturbing experience. "During the boom," he says, "a friend of mine and I bought some copper shares. We made $400 or $500, and pyramided it, and then lost it all in the crash. Well, it was a cheap experience for me; some of my friends lost all of their savings. Today I only invest in my own business." Now he began to make regular trips to Philadelphia, where his brother had opened an automobile agency. "There were plenty of pawnshops in Philly," he says, "and I went from shop to shop, buying merchandise, reselling it in New York, and making a handsome profit." Then, in 1933, when the United States went off the gold standard, he quit his job, and began traveling about, buying and selling gold. It was an abortive venture. "I made some money," he says, "but not too much. It was interesting, and I might have stuck to it, but my expenses were too high. So when they offered me my position back, I went back."

The pawnshop business did not fall off during the depression, although its character altered as sales dropped and loans increased. Berg is reluctant to discuss the events, dilemmas, and mishaps of this period. "Business is best in normal times," he says, sensitive to inferences. "When everybody is working and there's no inflation, no depression. Normal times. That's what this country has been trying to get since 1776." In 1934 Berg met his wife, Gertrude, at a summer resort, and a year later they were married. Gertrude was a short, blond girl of twenty-eight, a graduate of Hunter College and a school teacher. After their marriage, Berg began to plan and save in earnest, with the objective of opening his own shop as soon as possible. "It took me three years to get all the money together," he says, "with both of us working. Thirty thousand dollars. It's not a business you can go into with $3,000 or $4,000; you've got to have money to loan."

He opened his shop in 1938. "I picked a location," he says, "which I felt was the first they'd see coming downtown from uptown. It also was near the hotels and rooming houses, and I didn't want to go too far away, because I knew I'd take a certain amount of business away from my old bosses. I knew that I was going to lose money at the beginning, and I did. I showed a loss the first year, and a small loss the second year. I tried to keep expenses down; I was the only one in help, and I didn't draw much of a salary. I advertised for business in buses. And bought a lot of secondhand stuff in stores on Sixth and Third Avenue so it would look like a pawnshop." His trade grew. "From then on," he says, "we got out of the woods. When we got into the war I had a nice inventory—and you could sell anything. There wasn't much pawning, but they were knocking down our doors for merchandise. Everything was rocketing, and the longer we held it the more we got for it. For instance, I had a couple of cases of 67-cent alarm clocks, and I sold them for $3.50 a piece. Then I got interested in antiques and began to buy and sell them, and there was quite a lucrative business in that. Well, that's the breaks in business, I went into business at the right time."

SINCE he went to work behind the counter, Berg has observed a few local changes in pawnbroking. "Brokers have dressed up and

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cleaned up their shops," he says. "And they're more courteous, and don't try to pull anything. Years ago, fellas would stand outside and try to sell you a bargain. All you had to do was look in the window, and you were in; that was their job, hustling you into the store. To sell suitcases, the broker used to buy gold-filled rings for 10 cents apiece and put one in each valise. The customer would see it—the broker would pretend not to—and he'd be tempted to buy. I don't think people would fall for that today, they're too sophisticated. Twenty years ago Park Row and the Bowery had most of the pawnshops. But today they've moved uptown—to Columbus Avenue, Harlem, the East Bronx. Now Harlem is the busiest neighborhood, the melting pot."

Berg today is successful and prosperous. He drives a Cadillac, lives in a $35,000 home in the suburbs, and dines often in restaurants like Longchamps, Lindy's, and the Chambord. "He's advanced himself," says one friend of his, "and made good money for the past twenty years. He has average tastes, and likes quite heavy food, and spoils his children a little. When he moved out to Great Neck a few years ago he didn't particularly care for it—his tastes weren't so expensive, more simple—but he's beginning to get into it now." His home in Great Neck is an eight-room, ranch-type dwelling, with an acre of land which he conscientiously gardens in the evening and on the weekend; his next-door neighbors are a doll manufacturer and an attorney. "This is a new development," he says. "Kenilworth Terrace, fourteen homes. I like it on the whole. It's a nice community, wonderful for the children, and we've met some lovely people. Recently we formed a Civic League so we can get better acquainted and do things to improve our property; a majority of the communities out here have their own swimming pool, and we may build one too." His home is comfortably furnished, with wall-to-wall carpeting, modern and "traditional" furniture, and many antiques, including a Regency dining table, Meissen figures, Royal Doulton vases, Royal Worcester china, and a great antique bowl from the home (and with the crest) of a Duchess of Kent. A maid comes in to clean and wash three days a week.

BERG and his wife have two children: Paula, fourteen, and Richard, ten. He is an excitable yet indulgent father. "My little guy loves to build things," he says. "Just give him a hammer and nail. And he's crazy about planes. Paula is an even-tempered child, and loves school. Of course, she's getting into her teens now and beginning to enjoy parties and dancing. We took her to the Latin Quarter and she was fascinated." In the evening Berg strolls his dog, Peppy, a toy fox terrier, and then reads the *World-Telegram & Sun* and perhaps the *Reader's Digest* or *Life*. He also likes to watch television, and occasionally see a Broadway musical or adventure movie. He is a Mason, and a member of the New York Pawnbrokers' Association, the Men's Club of Temple Beth-El in Great Neck, and B'nai B'rith —but he isn't active. In the summer he likes to golf and fish in upstate New York, where he and his wife have a summer home. "Fishing is my hobby," he says. "I love to fish. I relax and don't think of anything; I'm in the fresh air. Eight years ago I used to own a thirty-two foot Wheeler cruiser, and go deep-sea fishing. It was a good-looking boat, with windows all around and two wells for fishing, but Gert didn't like to go out in it and I sold it." "He's the venturesome type," his wife says. "I'm a look-before-you-leap. He likes to keep going, doing something all the time. And he's a little temperamental—moody, restless."

He is not a reflective or religious man. "I believe in God," he says. "But, I have my own belief. Trying to do the right thing. Helping my family. I've always been a great fatalist, and I don't try to do things I can't do, I'm not a four-flusher. And if I have anything to tell a person I tell him. I don't like a liar; Ihate to lie, unless it's absolutely necessary." Berg is preoccupied with his business and his family, and has relatively few other interests. "I only vote in Presidential elections," he says, for example. "And I never talk politics—or religion—with my customers. It must conflict with your business, and be detrimental. If he likes Ike I like Ike. I like to get the most out of life in a sensible way—and I have. I married a wonderful woman. I've got two lovely children. I've got a house and a car, and I had a cruiser; if I go tomorrow I haven't missed anything. Like every young fellow, I wanted things I couldn't afford and promised myself I'd get them when I was older."

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

SOME LOVE LETTERS OF MOSES MENDELSSOHN

A Philosopher to His Bride

THE story is told that when Moses Mendelssohn asked Fromet Gugenheim to marry him, she hesitated on account of his being hunchbacked. He thereupon told her that heaven, which makes all marriages, had once given him the privilege of viewing his future bride. And behold, she was somewhat deformed. He then asked God to take the deformity away from her and give it to him, for he wanted nothing to mar her perfection. This impressed Fromet so deeply that she consented immediately.

The chances are that this little tale is the figment of folk imagination. But it is quite true that the romance of Moses and Fromet was a beautiful one. Mendelssohn was over thirty years old when he visited a friend in Hamburg, met Fromet Gugenheim, and fell in love with her. She was neither wealthy nor strikingly beautiful. But she must have had an inner beauty to captivate the heart of the already celebrated Jewish philosopher. The letters Moses wrote to her during the two years of their engagement—as he was in Berlin and she in Hamburg, this was their only method of communication while the necessary steps were being taken to secure Mendelssohn's residence permit in Berlin—are gems of unaffected love mixed with the deepest moral sensitivity. Heir to the finest elements of traditional Judaism and those of humanistic Germany, equally at home with Lessing and the Talmud, Mendelssohn reveals perhaps nowhere as much as here the harmonious unity of his personality. Ranging from a gentle rebuke for too much reading to the citing of a story about Socrates as an excuse for not sending Fromet a Purim gift, the letters cover all the subjects that would concern two lovers separated from each other.

With the exception of the first letter, which, being addressed to Lessing, was written in German, all the letters to Fromet in this selection were written in Hebrew characters in a kind of Jewish German. Occasionally there are Hebrew expressions and where necessary the English translation has been provided in footnotes.

—MICHAEL WYSCHOGROD

To Gotthold Ephraim Lessing

[Berlin, middle of May 1761]

DEAREST FRIEND! Our correspondence has been interrupted long enough. I must now renew it. I could never have kept silent so long had I not made a journey to Hamburg which involved me in a thousand distractions. I visited the theater, I made the acquaintance of scholars, and, something that will surprise you not a little, I committed the foolishness of falling in love in my thirtieth year. You are laughing? Very well! Who knows what may still happen to you? Perhaps the thirtieth year is the most dangerous and you haven't reached that yet. The female whom I intend to marry has no fortune, is neither beautiful nor learned, and nevertheless, enamored fool that I am, I am so captivated by her as to believe that I can live happily with her. A livelihood, I hope, will not be lacking and I certainly will not permit lack of leisure for study. You will have a full year for the wedding poem but nevertheless your lazy muse must reach once more for its dusty lyre. Otherwise, how can I have an unsung wedding?—So much about my domestic matters which interest you perhaps very little but nevertheless serve as my excuse.

* * *

To Fromet Gugenheim

[Berlin, June 5, 1761]

DEAREST FROMET! Do you know that I am beginning to be jealous about your girlfriend? Never did you express yourself so tenderly, never were your sensibilities so

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true, so natural, as when you wish me luck about the relationship of my friend with your girl-friend. I know of a connection in which you and I participate somewhat and this does not seem to satisfy you with the world as much as the good fortune of your girl-friend. Now everything you see and hear gives you pleasure; now the world seems beautiful to you and its inhabitants friendly and loveable. You are swimming in pure pleasure and, if I am not fooling myself, this friendship has opened your heart for love too, because now you speak of your love more tenderly than ever. I looked into your writing to see whether I could discover any traces of disquiet caused by the postponement of our happiness; and, to tell you the truth, as much as I love you, I would have wished it, but in vain! Friendship alone is the master of your heart and as your friends are happy, so are you. I love you for this that much more and am becoming convinced daily more and more that I was happy in my choice. A heart that cherishes friendship is disposed to everything good.

You write about your diligence in studying French. Dearest Fromet! Please do not overdo this diligence, and protect your health. It is of much too great importance to me. I think I know your capabilities. You do not have to damage your body in order to improve your soul. Study whatever you like but with moderation and, to make it brief, without ever reading by artificial light during the summer days. I consider this a great abuse, which is against nature, to make use of artificial light in a climate in which the hours of darkness are anyway so few in the summer.

Please inform me, dearest Fromet, about what you are doing currently, what you are reading in German. Did you have Herr de Gastro get you Rousseau's letters? Did you read some of them and how do you like them? In all seriousness, should I not send you the letters of Catesby* in German? You must be able to control your urges very much indeed if you can resist the pleasure of reading these letters until you will be able to read them in French. I envy you this philosophic abstention and confess my own weakness.

Adieu, my dear friend! I wish daily to receive from you letters which breathe such true, such tender joy and which reveal the innocence of the heart so clearly. Continue to love me, my dearest friend, and be assured that I will constantly strive to outdo you in love. I am your faithful friend and admirer

HA-KOTON MAUSCHE MI-DESSAU
[the humble Moses of Dessau]

[Berlin, July 28, 1761]

VERY DEAREST FROMET! I have made a discovery in your father's letter which delighted me not a little. The goodly man assures me that his daughter Fromet is as beautiful as she is virtuous. What do you think? Can one believe the word of an honest man? I laughed heartily at his well-meant appraisal. The good Reb Avrohom Gugenheim must know that philosophers, too, love the beautiful. But there he must forgive me. I know his Fromet better than he does. She is beautiful, but not as beautiful as virtuous, not as beautiful as she is tender. I envy you, dearest Fromet, for the fortunate manner in which you are able to express your tender love. Your briefest letters are full of tenderness, full of sensitivity. The language of the heart is your natural language and your noble sentiment takes the place of the frosty wit which disfigures the letters of others so odiously. Continue, dearest and gentlest Fromet, to delight me with your amiable letters. I notice that it is becoming practically impossible for me to take pleasure in a post-day on which I do not write or receive a letter from you. What is man without some pleasure? No, so long as we must be separated let us provide ourselves with the opportunity of thinking of each other as often as possible. It causes me no small pleasure to think: now Fromet is reading my letters, now she is writing to me, now she is irritated at being disturbed, and now she is happy to have found the right expression. . . .

Adieu, my darling, give my regards to your girl-friend, who honored me with a letter that reflected honor on her way of thinking.

HA-KOTON MAUSCHE MI-DESSAU

[Berlin, September 1, 1761]

DEAREST FROMET! That's what I call defying the actors. In the theater you see a philosopher-in-love making himself ridiculous and you even laugh at him; nevertheless, at the same time you make the decision not to love your philosopher-in-love any the less.

*A French novel by Marie Jeanne Riccoboni entitled *Letters* [sic] *de Milady Catesby.*

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But your philosopher is not in love. That he thinks without interruption about his Gugenheim, that he kisses every line you write, that he wishes nothing so much as to see you happy (particularly through him), that every hour seems to him a year, every step a mile which separates you from him—if you call this being in love, then I am satisfied if you and Madame Gottingen find me ridiculous. In order to revenge myself, I will write a comedy in which female philosophers-in-love will not be spared.

MAUSCHE MI-DESSAU

[Berlin, November 10, 1761]

DEAREST FROMET! I am informed by Reb Salman Emmerich that you very much overdo your diligence in reading, almost abusing it. This I cannot approve at all. What do you wish to accomplish by that? To become a scholar? God save you from that! Moderate learning becomes a lady, but not scholarship. A girl who has read her eyes red deserves to be laughed at. You, my dearest Fromet, must not take refuge in books except in two cases: when your mood needs some diversion which it does not find in social intercourse, and when your heart is in need of strengthening its prompting for good. One of these sicknesses can be helped by medicine, but too much medicine does harm.

Your father, *chomi ha-m'juod she-jichje** will spend *shabbos habo olenu l'tauvo im jirze ha-Shem*† with us. Nothing as yet has been decided about his departure. As impatient as he is to see his beloved ones again, he must attend to his affairs here before he can go on. I am strengthened daily in my judgment about him and my love for him increases in equal measure. Farewell, dearest Fromet, and if you want to be diligent at all costs, throw the books away and . . . [manuscript ends here].

[Berlin, March 9, 1762, Purim]

DEAREST FROMET! All give each other presents today and I have nothing to give you, but I will tell you a little story. Once there came to the wise Socrates a student and said: My dear Socrates, everybody who deals with you brings you some present. I have nothing to give you except myself; please do not spurn me. What, said the wise man, do you consider yourself so worthless as to be asking me to accept you? Well, good, I will give you some advice: strive to become so good that your person becomes the most valuable present. That's the end of my tale. I, too, my dear Fromet, will strive to become so good as to enable you to say that no present I could give you would be better than your sincere

MAUSCHE MI-DESSAU

*"My father-in-law, may he live."

†"The coming Sabbath, may it be for good with God's help."

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ON THE HORIZON

A WEEK OF DOODLE, AND OTHER POEMS

REED WHITTEMORE

A Week of Doodle

Monday

I will now address myself to the problem of writing
A few lines, a very few lines each day
During this winter of waiting and waiting and waiting
For something to say,

So that this special skill by which I live,
This talent of mine with an image, a rhyme and a pen,
Will suffer as little from cold and snow and neglect
As a well-oiled gun,

On the theory that one spring day I'll get up early,
Walk out with vigor and find on a tree a bill
Announcing that verse is once again in season—
Gridley, fire at will.

Tuesday

This kind of thing (these lines) might be likened to those
Hobbies with hammers and drills
Practiced in all the best basements by men who'd dispose
Of some of a long day's cache of bills and ills

In the evening. Manual therapy.
Even physicians practice it. It is approved.
The mind is soothed by the hand as the hand pounds a rickety
Chair or table together; violently soothed,

As, in this instance, this unregenerate mind
Seeks to dispose of some of its winter's reverses

REED WHITTEMORE's poems (and prose fiction and criticism) have appeared in many of the familiar literary magazines, and he was himself editor and publisher of *Furioso*. A volume of his verse was issued in 1947 by Reynal and Hitchcock. Mr. Whittemore, who has served as a captain in the Air Force, was born in 1910, in New Haven, Connecticut. He took his bachelor of arts degree at Yale University.

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By letting this ink in this pen in this clumsy hand
Make (for this mind) these verses.

Friday

You see how quickly the system has broken down.
Already two days have elapsed since I last entrusted
A line to this journal; already my modest design
Has proved too complex; I'm bested.

This brings me to my point for today. You recall
An essay by Mr. Eliot some time ago
On minor poetry. What is it? he asked, and with all
The solemnity of the Pope said he didn't know.

I know even less (of course anyone knows even less
Than T.S.), but I think of this journal
As evidence of some weight of a kind of verse
Neither major nor minor but merely (an old kind) doodle.

Saturday

Doodle is waiting raised to a fine art,
Waiting in phone booths for answers, in classrooms for tests.
It is done with but part of the mind, but a pleasant part.
It brightens deserts of notebooks, scrap pads and desks.

It does, in my case, for my work, what others expect
Of courses in writing—how to express and impress;
And improves my condition no end in a different respect
Since, in a pinch, I can sell it for (minor) verse.

But of course it has limits. Even a week seems extravagant
Of just it. So my readers all over the world will (I hope) come to thank
Me for my notable wisdom and judgment
On those days of this week—just two, not counting Sunday—when I was blank.

Spring Again

"If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"
—Luke, Chapter 23.

At the end of that lengthy winter, after the snow
Had vanished into the ground, leaving on top
The refuse of a dead season—leaves and stalks
And all possible forms of pastness, withered and brown—
It was hard to be wholly sure
That the land would heave again, and breathe, and proceed
With the vast labor of spring. At least, for an author,
The chance that the annual miracle might not occur,
Though a long one, was worth some attention, since there was always
Some kind of market somewhere for "fantasy fiction."

He could describe the annual chores—the turning of earth,

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The raking, clearing, seeding, planting—based
On the normal and healthy assumption that this year, like last,
Something would come of it all, something green, something edible,
And life with corn and potatoes would go on.
And then he could switch to the faces of men and describe
All the mounting phases of loss—disbelief and fear,
Anger and violence, horror and then at last calm—
As the spring that was not to be spring advanced, and the summer
That never would come
Hovered, a new breed of carrion, in that future
Where robins and bluejays and larks
Should have been, would have been, if only
A valve or a switch or a faucet no one could fix
Had not, after all these years, somehow got clogged.

So ran an author's thoughts in that season of brown,
Thoughts of a new Jeremiah looking for something
Saleable even as shoots of green began groping
Their way in the dark to the surface of things,
And robins appeared on schedule, and buds swelled.

An American Takes a Walk

In the middle of this life's journey
He came, like Dante, on a wood
The notes said stood for error
But in his case stood for good,
Where his art and prowess left him
And left him become a child
To whom the wild seemed milder
Than his old neighborhood.

Had he, with those abandoned
Sons of fatal decrees,
Then been found by a shepherd
And bred up to shepherdese,
Or retrieved, like Dante, by Virgil
And led through circles and seas
To some brighter country beyond
His annotated trees,

He could not have been more cared for.
Nature was all a park.
Such greenness and warmth, such abundance
Made his plight a lark.

How in that Arden could human
Frailty be but glossed?
How in that Eden could Adam
Be really, wholly lost?

The Line of an American Poet

That American Poet's future
Is bright because he began
With the know-how of Ford and Chrysler
And the faith of American Can.

He fathomed success's secret
And stuck to his P's and Q's
And urged himself, over and over,
To produce and produce and produce.

His very first verses were cleverly
Built; the market boomed.
Some of the world's most critical
Consumers looked, and consumed.

Lines off his line became smoother
And smoother as more and more
Know-how came in the window
And verses rolled out the door.

Now everyone in the market
Knows that his new works are sure
To be just what the country has need of:
Poems uniform, safe and pure.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

NEW LIGHT ON "THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY"

A Survey of Recent Research and Criticism

NATHAN GLAZER

THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY, published in 1950 as part of the Studies in Prejudice series sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, stands as one of the most ambitious efforts of modern American social science. In the 990 pages, 500,000 words, and 100 tables of *The Authoritarian Personality*, four senior authors (T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford) and three collaborators analyzed the results of a large-scale research project on anti-Semitism and group prejudice ("ethnocentrism") conducted at the University of California in Berkeley. The project had studied more than 2,000 individuals, mostly college students but also sizeable numbers of middle-class adults, prisoners, patients undergoing psychiatric treatment, labor-union members, and some other working-class people. The social scientists tried to demonstrate from this material that anti-Semitism and ethnocentrism were more than "opinions": they were rather facets of a definite personality type. The roots of this "authoritarian personality" were to be explained by the concepts of psychoanalysis; but its existence, the authors believed, could be demonstrated simply by the use of questionnaires.

THE authoritarian personality was described by the authors as rigidly adhering to conventional, middle-class values; uncritically submissive to official moral authorities; tending to reject and condemn those who violated conventional values; opposed to the subjective, the imaginative, the introspective; disposed to think in rigid categories and to emphasize mystical determinants of the individual's fate; preoccupied with problems of status and strength and weakness; disposed to believe that wild, dangerous, and secret things go on in the world; preoccupied with sexual transgressions.

All these traits (and many others) could be deduced, according to the logic of psychoanalytic thinking, from a family situation in which the parents were anxious about their own status, did not give enough unqualified love to their children, and were strict but inconsistent in their discipline, thus taking on, in the eyes of their children, the character of "forces" which could not be opposed and had to be constantly propitiated. The children's repressed hostility and aggression toward the parents—and, later, the hostility and aggression that might be appropriately vented on bosses, the state, and other parent-like figures—are released on "out-groups" and various powerless objects (Jews, Negroes, the poor, etc.). Anyone acquainted with psychoanalytic thinking will be able to imagine the vast range of personality traits such a personal history can open to view.

THE study of anti-Semitism and group prejudice in this country has been fundamentally affected by the monumental volume *The Authoritarian Personality*, published in 1950, which in the few years since its publication has become a kind of "classic" in American social science. NATHAN GLAZER discusses here the recently published book *Studies in the Scope and Method of "The Authoritarian Personality,"* edited by Richard Christie and Marie Jahoda (Glencoe, Illinois; The Free Press), a volume of essays which further explores and evaluates the implications of the larger volume. Mr. Glazer, until recently an associate editor of COMMENTARY, is now with the Anchor Books department of Doubleday and Company.

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The researchers devised four true-false questionnaires: (1) the "F-scale," designed to test for authoritarian traits ("F" stands for fascism, since the authoritarian traits are presumed to be "pre-fascist"); (2) the "A-S scale," testing for anti-Semitism; (3) the "E-scale," testing for ethnocentrism (including anti-Semitism); and (4) the "PEC-scale," testing for political and economic conservatism. Anti-Semitic, ethnocentric, conservative, and authoritarian opinions are scored "high"; their opposites, "low." (The terms "high" and "low" in the meaning of "authoritarian" and "non-authoritarian" have already entered the vocabulary of contemporary American social psychology; we will continue to use them with no further identification). In general, it was found that high scorers on any one of the tests tended to score high on the others, thus establishing, apparently, a clear correlation between anti-Semitic or ethnocentric opinions and a general leaning towards conservatism and authoritarianism (pre-fascism).

Persons scoring in the highest and lowest quarters on the test for ethnocentrism were selected for intensive study by means of interviews and psychological "projective" tests, to further check the relation between ethnocentrism and authoritarianism. The interviews emphasized: the childhood history of the subject; his relations to parents, brothers, and sisters; his present relations with other people; his views of himself, his future, his work. More than ninety specific topics were covered in the interviews, and for each it was hypothesized in advance what might be expected to be the "high" variant (in attitudes towards parents, self, work, etc.), what the "low." Persons unacquainted with the scores of the subjects on the various tests then read the interviews, deciding whether the person was high or low for each topic. Again, the results showed that the more anti-Semitic and ethnocentric group was generally high, the non-anti-Semitic and non-ethnocentric group low, in relation to authoritarianism.

II

In the few years since its publication, *The Authoritarian Personality* has inspired scores of doctoral theses and hundreds of less elaborate studies which have used its concepts and its tests, and attempted to elaborate or test the thesis presented. No volume published since the war in the field of social psychology has had a greater impact on the direction of the actual empirical work being carried on in the universities today.

One must ascribe the impact of *The Authoritarian Personality* first of all, I think, to the fact that it said something of some importance about an important subject. This simple fact serves to differentiate it from much of the highly regarded recent work in the social sciences, which has said nothing, or, to be just, has said nothing *of significance* about our society (or other existing societies) or Americans (or other existing variants of the human species). As a matter of fact, the most admired work in the social sciences today is, it appears, not supposed to say anything about anything, being occupied not with substance, but with method, devoted to discussion of *how* something should be said—*if* it were to be said. So the most respected figures in the field of sociology today, and to a lesser extent in social psychology, themselves actually say nothing—at times they suggest a hypothesis for someone else to test; at times it is believed they themselves are engaged in the testing of some significant hypothesis by the refined methods appropriate to their status; but usually nothing published can be pointed to.

It is thus understandable why the only two postwar works in the social and psychological sciences which, it is generally agreed, have said something of some scope and significance (right or wrong), were written, respectively, by a group headed by German émigré philosophers (*The Authoritarian Personality*) and by a former lawyer (*The Lonely Crowd*). Now the saying of something is, if nothing else, a great help for the younger men in the field: it gives them something to test, and it suggests a new way of looking at a group of subjects; and this was a great virtue of *The Authoritarian Personality*.

One must not ignore a second major virtue from the point of view of the young aspirant for a Ph.D. degree: *The Authoritarian Personality* was filled with ready-made tests that had already been taken through many of the technical procedures of validation which every test must pass. A test to a social psychologist is like nectar to a bee. Regardless of what it studies and how it studies it, someone some place is going to use it and see whether the results on it correlate with results on some other tests. And indeed, we now know how "highs" and "lows" perform on half a hundred other tests,

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some of them part of the regular equipment of the social psychologist, some of them *ad hoc* creations designed to test some special characteristic. (The absence of tests may explain why the "inner-directed, other-directed" dichotomy of *The Lonely Crowd* has been more spoken of than used in the social sciences: until the more ingenious workers in the field create appropriate tests—and some are at work on the problem now—the others will be at a loss.)

FINALLY we must point to a third reason for the impact of *The Authoritarian Personality* —the overwhelmingly liberal complexion of contemporary social scientists. Of course they want to fight prejudice, and they are delighted to make use of a theory which paints the anti-Semite in the most unpleasant terms. But more than this, *The Authoritarian Personality* connected prejudice with something even more hateful: the "reactionary," pious in his attachment to conventional values, anti-intellectual, suspicious of "ologies" and "isms," antagonistic to the foreigner, the immigrant, the labor movement, mouthing loyalty to the Constitution while daily demanding the abrogation of the Bill of Rights. It is clear that this type of person is "authoritarian," as described in the book; to be able to add to the bill of indictment against him that he is also, in some very fundamental way, anti-Semitic and "pro-fascist" is a pleasure even to a scientist, especially since the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* seem quite oblivious to authoritarianism on the political left, and so set a precedent for studying authoritarianism without need for unpleasant self-examination.

This is quite a mixed bag of incentives, and not all of them apply to everyone. As we shall see, many who took over where the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* left off were interested in overcoming the faults of their theory; others, interested chiefly in confirming the theory, may have served to perpetuate those faults.

III

WE NOW have before us an excellent volume summing up the first four years of the work in criticism and elaboration of the concepts of *The Authoritarian Personality* (*Studies in the Scope and Method of "The Authoritarian Personality,"* edited by Richard Christie and Marie Jahoda; Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 279 pp., $4.50). It may be safely said that no important work in American social science has been so well served by its critics. The criticism is sharp and on the whole just, and is unrestrained by those considerations for the personal feelings of colleagues and of the sponsoring institution that so often blunt criticism—not that the authors are inconsiderate, but, as we have said, the major responsibility for the book is borne by a group of émigré scholars, and both the over-all editor (Max Horkheimer) and one of the authors (T. W. Adorno) have since returned to Germany; and the sponsoring institution has encouraged criticism by making it amply clear that it was interested in the studies not as received knowledge or doctrine, but as a pioneer and catalytic contribution to a continuing search for truth on a central problem of modern society.* In a sense, the character and the scope of the criticism are the highest tribute to the value of the study: it is in a class by itself in the field, if the extensiveness, keenness, and quality of the analytic and critical research it has stimulated is any measure.

Despite the fact that it is made up of five different studies by different writers, this volume is so fully representative of what can be said in criticism and in support of the original volume, and of the subsequent work devoted to its thesis, that the best thing we can do is to describe the contents of these essays in order.

THE first essay—"Authoritarianism: 'Right' and 'Left,'" by Edward A. Shils—takes up the important question of the political orientation of *The Authoritarian Personality,* and the way this affected the actual empirical work. Mr. Shils points out that the "Right-Left" spectrum that summed up the range of political thought in the 19th century has been obscured by the rise of Bolshevism, which is not "Left," out of the Left, and the rise of fascism, which is not "Right," out of the Right. Those under the influence of Marxist thinking in all its forms have tried to preserve the 19th-century view by arguing that Bolshevism is (or was)

*This volume of criticism is the second in a series called "Continuities in Social Research," started with the idea of encouraging really long and full analyses and critiques of major works in the social sciences. The first volume in the series was devoted to *The American Soldier,* a vast and on the whole empty work published in 1949. It is revealing of what sociologists like to call "power relations" when they are talking about other people that scarcely a word that could be considered criticism was breathed in this first volume of "critical" essays.

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really the heir of socialism and other democratic working-class movements, extreme, to be sure, and modified by the peculiar conditions of Russia, while fascism was really only the servant of "big business." The fact that the two have, in point of realities and contemporary experience, steadily approximated each other, and that their relations to the historic programs of Left and Right have by now become purely historical, if that, has made little impression on those political analysts influenced by Marx.

Mr. Shils asserts that *The Authoritarian Personality* is an instance of this "steadfast adherence to the Right-Left polarity" in the face of all evidence. This polarity he finds present not only "in the general interpretive chapters . . . but in the severely empirical chapters. . . . The entire team of investigators proceeds as if there were a unilinear scale of political and social attitudes at the extreme right of which stands the Fascist . . . and at the other end what the authors call the complete democrat, who actually holds the views of the non-Stalinist Leninist." This is a rather strong and uncompromising statement, but Mr. Shils, in expanding it, properly modifies it; the complete democrat of *The Authoritarian Personality,* it turns out, if we examine the views he is expected to support, is the kind of person who believes "the Wallaceite clichés to which [in the late 40's] Communists and fellow-travelers gave their assent, as well as persons of more humane sentiment. . . ."

Thus some of the statements offered for "true" or "false" answers on the PEC-scale, which serves to divide conservatives from liberals, read as follows:

"It is the responsibility of the entire society, through its government, to guarantee everyone adequate housing, income, and leisure."

"The only way to provide adequate medical care is through some program of socialized medicine."

"It is essential after the war to maintain or increase the income taxes on corporations and private individuals."

"Labor unions should become stronger by being politically active and by publishing labor newspapers to be read by the general public."

"If America had more men like Henry Wallace in office we would get along much better."

(It is only fair to point out that on the final form of this scale, which is the one used in the study, the Wallace item is dropped, and the labor union item much milder.)

Mr. Shils asserts: "The failure to discriminate the substantially different types of outlook which could be called liberal, liberal collectivist, radical, Marxist, etc. . . . flows from the authors' failure to perceive the distinctions between totalitarian Leninism . . . humanitarianism, and New Deal interventionism." Mr. Shils then goes on to point out that there are really great similarities between the authoritarian ideology tested by the F-scale, and the authoritarianism of Communism. Thus in both we find a great stress on the importance of secret plotting in the way the world runs, though one group believes the plotters are the Elders of Zion and the other believes they are the bankers of Wall Street. (And, as recent events have shown, the mythology of the "Left" can be almost as anti-Semitic as that of the "Right.") Both take a mystical and irrational view of the world, though in one case it may be expressed in a belief in astrology and the power of blood, and in the other in an absolute adherence to the world of Marx and Lenin, called "science." Both emphasize the importance of discipline, strong and fearless leaders, untiring work against the vermin ("fascist vermin" is one of the pet Communist phrases) who are undermining society, and so on.

However, Mr. Shils does not quite satisfy us when he tries to show just how the failure to see these points of identity between "Left" and "Right" affects the actual scientific undertaking. He would have been helped, I think, had he studied an earlier and to my mind superior analysis of the political outlook of *The Authoritarian Personality*—"Prejudice in the Catastrophic Perspective," by Paul Kecskemeti (COMMENTARY, March 1951). Thus Mr. Shils's main argument is that a number of leftist authoritarians can actually be detected in the "low" group selected, on the basis of their performance on the questionnaires, for further detailed study; yet the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* hardly noticed their existence. But he does not seem to realize that the individuals selected for intensive study were picked not on the basis of their performance on the F-scale, measuring authoritarian tendencies, but only on the basis of their performance on the E-scale, which measures anti-Semitism and ethnocentrism alone, not authoritarianism.

Now the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* can answer: if, as a matter of fact, Com-

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munists come out low on the E-scale, they are properly a subject of study together with all others who come out low. Our aim in studying the low-prejudice and high-prejudice groups as a unit was to see *what else* in the way of attitudes and what in the way of personality was associated with prejudice. In other words—if there are persons low on prejudice who are authoritarians, our study will reveal them. As a matter of fact, they can continue, we do refer to "rigid lows," a group low on the F-scale yet showing the same character of rigidity in the way they hold on to their liberal views that the highs show in holding on to their views. Further, the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* may answer to Shils, you have shown a strong resemblance between the *expressed* views of the rightist authoritarian, and the underlying *ideology* of Leninism. Yet this ideology on the whole remains hidden; it is certainly not exposed to the ordinary fellow-traveler, and probably not very clear to the ordinary party member. How then is an ordinary questionnaire to find this ideology? It will find—as it does—those who believe in liberal clichés and are used by others who actually adhere to the leftist authoritarian ideology. But these latter, even if they fell into the group we studied, would disavow this ideology.

TECHNICALLY, the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* are covered. But there are two important answers to this argument, an argument which in essence justifies a failure to make important political distinctions by pleading the limitations of one kind of scientific procedure. These answers were presented by Mr. Kecskemeti. First, he pointed out that all the attitudes associated *at a particular moment in time* (in this case the period of the Western alliance with Russia, and its afterglow) with an attitude we favor—that is, tolerance—are in effect idealized by *The Authoritarian Personality*. If at a given moment the most tolerant people are the supporters of Wallace's Progressive party, can we argue that we should be against those people who are against the members of the Progressive party? For one thing, the relation may be accidental and not inevitable and organic. (As a matter of fact, no study of the relation between attitudes and personality has yet, I believe, solved the problem of distinguishing ideology—the views someone picks up—from character—the orientations that are basic to a person.) Since he wrote his article, events have supported Mr. Kecskemeti's sharp criticism. For the extreme right in this country has in recent years been very careful to avoid all signs of anti-Semitism—which may indicate that anti-Semitism is less basic to an extreme rightist position than the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* believed. And at the same time, as we all know, in the last few years the Communist parties throughout the world have at times adopted a position indistinguishable from anti-Semitism.

Mr. Kecskemeti's second point was the necessity of considering the dynamics of history. If we get more militant liberals of the type admired by the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality,* it does not follow that prejudice will diminish but, more likely, that there will be a polarization of social tendencies into two extremes, creating a situation likely to produce *more* prejudice and making the position of the Jews more dangerous. Unquestionably, there were far more "militant liberals," in the sense in which the term is used in *The Authoritarian Personality,* in Germany in 1933 than there have ever been in the United States.

To these criticisms, I am afraid the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* can only plead guilty, falling back to a more limited and more defensible position. They have not *fully* shown the relation between authoritarianism and ethnocentrism; this turned out to be a more complicated one than they imagined. Rather, as Mr. Shils asserts and they might well admit, they have only studied one form of authoritarianism—which Mr. Shils properly describes as "nativism," the outlook exemplified by the fly-by-night anti-Semitic sheet and by all those who are susceptible to its arguments.

MR. SHILS'S article offers one further important criticism of *The Authoritarian Personality*. He argues that it is not possible to estimate the probability of fascism in the United States, which is one interest of the authors, by studying the nature and distribution of the authoritarian personality, for there is, he convincingly shows, no necessary relation between personality and policy. Policy will be carried on by institutions (parties, governments) regardless of the individual personalities that make them up. More, the success or failure of a policy—like fascism—is dependent not on the *number* of those with personalities presumed to be related to it, but on *social conditions,* and on success in perpetuating a cer-

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tain line *through organization,* which knows how to involve and tie together people of many kinds of characteristics and temperaments.

Indeed, Mr. Shils makes the interesting point that it is just because the leaders of American "nativism" are examples of the "authoritarian personality" that they are unable to be successful. Some of the characteristics of this personality, as we have seen, are great distrust of others, rigidity and mechanization of thought, weakness in understanding oneself and others, and various other traits deadly to one's capacity as a political leader. Harold Lasswell, who has pioneered in the study of the relations between political leadership and personality, argues to the same effect in another essay in this volume. He believes it is not likely that *leaders*, whether democratic or totalitarian, will be themselves authoritarians: leaders need to be strong and impressive *individuals*. The authoritarian personality is more likely to be found among the *followers* of political movements and in bureaucratic positions; the political skills needed by democratic leaders and totalitarian leaders alike do not seem, in our experience, to be of the authoritarian variety.

One can only conclude that much more work is necessary on persons in their character as political men, both as leaders and followers, something which Professor Lasswell has been advocating for years.

THE second essay in the book is a lengthy methodological critique by Herbert H. Hyman and Paul B. Sheatsley, who are known as acute practitioners and critics of the techniques of public opinion research. They proceed systematically and in detail through all the phases of the work described in *The Authoritarian Personality,* making many sharp criticisms.

In some cases I think they go too far, for example, in their feeling that the records of the interviews have been over-analyzed. Thus, T. W. Adorno, discussing an interview in which the subject had spoken of the Jews as "a ticklish problem," had written: "The term 'problem' is taken over from the sphere of science and is used to give the impression of searching, responsible deliberation. By referring to a problem, one implicitly claims personal aloofness. . . . This, of course, is an excellent rationalization for prejudice." Hyman and Sheatsley, taking issue with this, assert ". . . the very phrase, 'the Jewish problem,' or 'Negro problem,' is in such common usage that it has none of the properties imputed to it here." Now they are right in saying that the use of the term "the Negro problem" could not be interpreted as Adorno does, because there *is* a "Negro problem"—there are debates in Congress, the Supreme Court, in the press, and so on. But Adorno is right in realizing that the Jews are *not* a problem in this sense, and have not been in Western democratic countries since the beginning of the 19th century. It is only those who want to make them a "problem" who are likely to use such a phrase. Here, as elsewhere in their lengthy critique, Hyman and Sheatsley, I think, show the influence of their involvement with public opinion research, which, because it must deal with scores of interviewers and coders and thousands of respondents, cannot afford such fine analysis, but must rather analyze the gross characteristics of large numbers of people.

On the other hand, it is precisely their knowledge of public opinion research which leads them to what I believe are two important and potentially fruitful criticisms of *The Authoritarian Personality*.

(1) The group studied, as we have seen, consisted mostly of college students and middle-class adults. Now *The Authoritarian Personality* does not generalize to the whole American population on the basis of this particular group. What it does say, however, is that the relations that are found between sets of attitudes in this group will be found in people in general. Thus if it finds in its limited sample that ethnocentric individuals are authoritarian, it tends to assume it has found a general relationship between authoritarianism and ethnocentrism. However, the middle class is different from the working class: not only in the attitudes it holds, but in the way these attitudes are related to each other. Leo Srole, in a study of Springfield, Massachusetts, found, as a matter of fact, that the relation between scores on the F-scale and prejudice was greater for the college-educated than for the high-school-educated, and was really quite small in those with only elementary school education. That is, in this latter group there were many authoritarians who were not ethnocentric, and vice versa. The relation found in *The Authoritarian Personality,* it seems, holds only for the better educated.

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(2) *The Authoritarian Personality,* finding a correlation between authoritarianism and group prejudice, assumes that the two are related. But it is always possible in this type of study that there is a third factor independently related to the first two in such a way that if it were held constant it would explain the differences. For example: one may find that Jews earn more than non-Jews, and explain the difference in psychological terms (as *The Authoritarian Personality* explains the difference between those prejudiced and those not prejudiced); but if one compares city Jews with city non-Jews, and rural Jews with rural non-Jews, this difference in income may disappear; the general superiority in income of Jews over non-Jews may simply reflect the fact that Jews have a higher proportion of city-dwellers.

Hyman and Sheatsley argue in the same way, from a number of studies, that the prejudiced are differentiated from the unprejudiced not only by coming out higher on the F-scale, but by having less education, and they therefore suggest that authoritarianism, as tested by the F-scale, is *something produced by lack of education:* "As one examines the interview excerpts in the text, one is continually and vividly struck by the fact that some of the differences obtained, which are treated as determinants of ethnocentrism, seem actually mere reflections of formal education. For example, one of the factors found to differentiate the ethnocentric most significantly is a conventionality with respect to sex. . . . It is shown that high scorers emphasize conventional virtues in a mate, and the authors state: 'In contrast . . . the low-scoring subject takes a much more individualized attitude, as shown in the following [quotation]: 'She has to be intelligent, mature, emotionally stable, have adequate physiological characteristics. . . . She should have a maximum of femininity, since we're all bisexual. You can think of it in terms of a polyfactorial setup. . . .' It seems strange [continue Hyman and Sheatsley] for the authors to follow this quotation with the remark: 'The preceding description . . . reveals a conception of real people.' . . . It is later noted that high-scorers are more likely to explain phenomena in terms of heredity, physical or accidental factors, whereas low-scorers tend in general toward socio-psychological explanations. Again, one thinks immediately that this is a common correlate of formal education. . . ."

A number of items from the F-scale have been used in public opinion polls with national cross-sections. Hyman and Sheatsley quote some of the results, broken down by education:

Item from F-scale	Percentage agreeing who have		
	College Education	High School Education	Grammar School Education
The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to their parents.	35%	60%	80%
Any good leader should be strict with people under him in order to gain their respect.	36	60	66
Prison is too good for sex criminals. They should be publicly whipped or worse.	18	31	45
There are two kinds of people in the world: the weak and the strong.	30	53	71
No decent man can respect a woman who has had sex relations before marriage.	14	26	39

There would seem to be no question, then, that there is a close relation between authoritarianism—or whatever it is that the F-scale measures—and education. (Further evidence along the same lines is reported in "Authoritarianism and Political Behavior" by Morris Janowitz and Dwayne Marvick in the September 1953 *Public Opinion Quarterly.*) But by the same token, there is no question that more than education is involved, for 14 to 36 per cent of the college-educated will agree with one or another of these five sentiments from the F-scale. In addition, this major criticism of Hyman and Sheatsley contradicts, to some extent, their earlier one. If the sample is defective in being composed predominantly of college students and middle-class persons, then the differences in authoritarianism found in the sample cannot be due to the traits the subjects have in common, such as a college education.

What seems to be involved, more than the mere formal number of years of education—which is certainly important in itself—is another factor that we might call "intellectuality" or "sophistication." We all know that two college seniors with the same amount of educa-

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tion will differ enormously in the degree to which they reflect the ideas current among the intellectually sophisticated. But then what will determine who becomes sophisticated and who does not? Different backgrounds, to some extent, but I think we are ultimately driven back to psychological factors. Certainly the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* were wrong in not testing more extensively for social correlates to authoritarianism and ethnocentrism. But now, after these more extensive tests have been made, authoritarianism still stands as a psychological reality, a constellation of traits that can be located with many different tests, not only with the F-scale used in *The Authoritarian Personality*.

THIS, at any rate, is the conclusion of the next paper in this volume, which consists of a review of the most important work that has been done on the authoritarian personality since the publication of the book. Richard Christie, the author of this chapter, shows first of all that the psychological type described by *The Authoritarian Personality* as authoritarian is really that, and is really closely linked to fascism. Thus, a study by H. V. Dicks of German prisoners of war, comparing Nazis with the apolitical and the anti-Nazis, shows that the same differences in personality turned up as in the study of California college students. Jerome Himelhoch, in a doctoral thesis, used the F-scale to distinguish authoritarians from non-authoritarians, then gave his subjects Rorschach tests. By comparing the Rorschach records of "highs" and "lows," he was able to develop a scoring system which differentiated them, and which was successfully used on other samples to divide highs from lows. He then scored the Rorschach records of seven top Nazi leaders tried at Nuremberg (Goering, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Streicher, Ley, Frank, and Doenitz) and all scored high—just as his authoritarian students from New York University did.

In another study, Joan Eager and M. B. Smith tested a group of camp counselors with the F-scale. They then interviewed the children under them by means of a "guess who" test: which counselor treats you as if you were a baby?—and so on. Sure enough—those counselors who came out high on the F-scale were also revealed to be more authoritarian in the eyes of the children.

In another study, the F-scale was given to college students; then, as Christie writes, "each high scorer was paired with a low scorer and the two were required to spend twenty minutes together in which they were asked to discuss any aspect of radio, television, or the movies. . . . After this, the F-scale was given again but now each student was told to answer it in the way in which he thought the student he had just been talking with would. The second time they took the test the lows were able to almost approximate the scores of the highs; but the highs, in their second taking of the test, came out with scores scarcely lower than the first time." This, it is believed, demonstrates the rigidity of the highs, their greater projectivity (they see other people as themselves), and their lack of insight. Other tests, some as ingenious (and difficult to describe) as this one, also give results that seem to bear out the conclusions of *The Authoritarian Personality*.

The question also arises whether in comparing highs and lows we are only coming out with differences in intelligence. This problem had been taken up in *The Authoritarian Personality* and a low correlation had been found between I.Q.'s and low scores on the F-scale, too low to really explain the differences. Christie has gone into the matter, and has found that this relation is rather greater than *The Authoritarian Personality* indicates. Obviously we are dealing with very much the same things as the previous correlations between education and authoritarianism. The F-scale is surely tapping, in large measure, intelligence, education, and intellectual sophistication. Yet it must also be tapping something else, if in groups of homogeneous education and intelligence, more or less, it serves to differentiate persons from one another.

JUST what this something tapped by the F-scale is will be coming out more clearly as a result of some ingenious investigations, some of which are reported—not very adequately, or in sufficient detail—in the last chapter of this book by Else Frenkel-Brunswik, one of the original authors of *The Authoritarian Personality*. We have seen what difficulties arise in trying to use opinions to differentiate persons of different personalities. If we find many opinions, some hardly related—like anti-Semitism and a belief in astrology—in the same person, we are tempted to deep psychological explanations. To a large extent, both opinions may be the product of a limited intelligence or education—but suppose both appear in per-

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sons of adequate intelligence and education?

The problem has become one of getting tests of personality that do not have any relation to tests of opinion. Now rigidity is considered a basic characteristic of the authoritarian personality—he is rigid in his thinking because of his authoritarian upbringing (discipline, lack of love, etc.), because of his fear of facing his true aggressive feelings toward parents and parent-like figures of authority, and so on. Certain tests of rigidity, independent of opinion, are now being used with interesting and provocative results. Thus M. Rokeach has devised a test of simple problem-solving, in which a "set" is established—the subject is shown how to solve a certain problem, a few more problems of the same type are then offered to him, and finally he is offered a problem which, though solvable by the technique he has been using, can be solved much more directly by another technique. Now this might seem to be a simple test of intelligence, but Rokeach asserts that scores of rigidity based on it are highly correlated with ethnocentrism, and are only slightly related to intelligence. In the same way, Dr. Frenkel-Brunswik herself has found in certain experiments in perception in children—unfortunately, these have not yet been reported in adequate detail—that the ethnocentric are "intolerant of ambiguity." Various other experiments along the same line have been reported.

Out of these ingenious experiments in perception and modes of thinking we see emerging the same type, more or less, that was defined by the original F-scale. And even when tests quite divorced from opinion are used to detect this type, it is found to be prejudiced. These studies seem to me to be proving the central contention of *The Authoritarian Personality*: that there is a specific type, the authoritarian personality, characterized by rigidity and unable to think in subtle and complicated ways, and that this psychological type tends to be prejudiced. It is intriguing to discover, from Dr. Frenkel-Brunswik's chapter, that the Nazi psychologist Jaensch, who was an ingenious laboratory worker, described the same type, by way of similar experiments in perception—and idealized it. This was to him the pure, peasant, racial type, as against more "cosmopolitan" psychological varieties.

We are still only at the beginning of these investigations. *The Authoritarian Personality*, as I have said, has been well served by its criticism and if one looks only at the criticism, almost nothing seems to stand up of the original study. Yet what does stand up is the most important: the steady current of research into the problem of authoritarianism and prejudice which is being carried on by many able and ingenious scholars, which research, as far as one can now see, promises to validate—though at the same time to modify greatly—the central thesis of *The Authoritarian Personality*: that such a personality structure exists, and persists. But more important, it offers a key that promises to extend our knowledge of race and group prejudice. This department will carry further reports on the research as it becomes public.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Unions and the Public

To the Editor of Commentary:

A. H. Raskin's "Unions and the Public Interest" (February 1954) was very much in the public interest. Unions should be neither a sacred cow nor the object of Pegler's sadism. Mr. Raskin's approach is most refreshing and enormously helpful.

Towards the end of his article he seems to develop third-act trouble, and is rather hasty about tying up some loose ends. I am sure that in the more expanded treatment his thesis deserves he would have avoided making statements such as the following without justification by argument and documentation: "If labor and industry do not find a way to protect the public, a reaction will set in and the public will find its own way. The outcome may be an economy in which the government makes all the decisions. In that kind of economy, all of us together stand to lose our freedom." . . .

Here are some of the questions that come to mind:

1. In the long run are "labor and industry" outside of the realm of "the public"?

2. Why should a reaction to the anti-public practices of labor and industry suggest "an economy in which the government makes all decisions"? If regulation is here indicated, why must the bogey of fascism or Communism be introduced? Has government intercession and regulation hitherto meant only an accretion of totalitarianism?

3. If the government is equated with the public (as it properly is in Mr. Raskin's approach), why should its assumption of decision-making powers in our economy lead us to a situation in which "all of us together stand to lose our freedom"? What in the meantime has happened to our competing political parties, and our checks-and-balances complex of government, and our secret ballot, and our free traditions, and our independent spirit as a citizenry?

4. Are we in this country at the point where to set up an otherwise reasonable argument we must suggest that the alternative means loss of our own freedom? Can it really come as easily as all that? (I might add that I am a socialist and Mr. Raskin obviously is not, yet I have come to have far more confidence in our "capitalist" democracy than he seems to indicate in his article.)

William Stern

The Workmen's Circle
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

A. H. Raskin's "Unions and the Public Interest" (February) was an exceedingly valuable diagnosis. However, his assertion that "Most unions stored their education programs away so long ago that the chances of reviving them are slim," is not true. Where and what are the once-active unions that have stored away their plans? A glance through, for example, the summary given in *Labor and Nation,* fall issue of 1951, shows a large number of expanding union schemes. Further, it also shows how the institutions of higher learning are aiding the unions in this work. In all, forty-four union and labor groups, seven independent labor education organizations, and twenty universities reported activity, and a large number of union scholarships were listed. . . .

He overlooks the serious training work carried through, for example, by the Paper Makers Brotherhood and the regional institutes of the Machinists Union. He ignores the work in Roosevelt College, Chicago, the increased activity in union films, the numerous conferences operated by both the Workers Education Bureau and the Research and Education Department of the CIO, and by constituent unions of both the AFL and CIO. The many successful conferences held by the American Labor Education Service, which have recently concentrated upon getting a better understanding by trade union members of international relations, also contradict Mr. Raskin's assertion. He should not forget the good work done by the State Federations in Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, New Jersey, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, California, and Massachusetts, and the educational institutes run in the Southern states. The central Officers' Qualification Courses and the Training Institute of the ILGWU are supplemented by the courses for new members which are held regularly in all the main centers of the Union. . . .

Union leaders and union members who understand . . . know that union education,

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in its function as a discipline, a directive, and a dynamic, can refresh the idealism of the veterans and impart the ethics of labor solidarity to the recruits.

MARK STARR
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, New York City

Plaudit

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

What an *excellent* piece Cecil Roth's is in the February COMMENTARY! ("The Two Cradles of Jewish Liberty.")

I hope more pieces of this quality are to come for our Tercentenary.

HANS KOHN
New York City

"A Pulpit in the South"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was distressed to read the so-called "fictional" article "A Pulpit in the South" by Harry L. Golden, in the December 1953 issue.

While I am not a member of the congregation referred to in such a thinly veiled manner, nevertheless I feel that some harm has been done. . . . Your readers in other parts of the country will form an opinion of the South that would be to an extent false, and we, in turn, have no way of redressing whatever harm might have been done.

It would be rather foolish to pat ourselves on the back and say that "black is white," whereas we all know that there is a certain amount of "gray" in every situation. But Mr. Golden, instead of giving us a piece of literature, has written what citizens of the various communities here in the Southeast feel is an accusation of "Babbittry." Actually, we are not quite as bad as he pictures us. The pattern of social behavior has been thrust upon us by the established *mores* of this part of the country, a section which has been known loosely as "the Bible Belt." As a result, most visitors will find that the social life of *every* member of the community is monopolized to a very great degree by church and related activities. We, on the other hand, while not ghettoizing ourselves, at the same time find our social life rather circumscribed because of this fact. . . . [But] I have already seen a difference in the contacts our children have made with neighbors and schoolmates. There is with them a much greater amount of integration socially, as well as in other ways, than there is on the part of our generation.

This letter started out as a rebuttal, but is apparently ending up as an apology or explanation, which is a rather weak way of settling the question. The entire situation should be considered not quite so much in the focus that brother Golden wishes it to be, but rather as a blurred picture of what is common in the daily situation of individuals or communities all over the country.

Personally, I believe that the position of a rabbi in the South holds more promise for the future of the rabbinate, of Judaism, as well as of the congregation, than in other parts of the country—primarily because of the type of people with whom the rabbi has to work. These are usually younger and more positive-minded Jews, and Jews to whom their congregational life is of vital importance.

I am sorry that Mr. Golden's article was printed without somewhat more careful research on the scene.

MORRIS SPEIZMAN
Charlotte, N.C.

Literary "Kashrut"?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I cannot recall, in the years I have been reading your magazine, word from a reader about the short stories you publish. In my own case, I have long wanted to say something about their questionable quality.

Granted COMMENTARY is not a literary quarterly, but rather a monthly journal of opinion, yet COMMENTARY's editors feel that literature is proper in its pages, else why a story every month? But why, almost invariably, a second-rate story, in an otherwise first-rate publication? The answer lies, I suspect, in some editorial haze as to precisely what purpose literature is intended to serve in a magazine with a "Jewish slant." . . .

[It may be] that COMMENTARY's purpose is to explore through works of the imagination the impact of Jewishness (a vague concept) on the modern world and vice versa. If this be the case, good. But here, I think, COMMENTARY has failed, because of the mistaken assumption that to achieve this end, one issue after another must turn up a story with Jewish heroes, Jewish plots, and Jewish themes. I doubt that a kind of *kashrut* in literature best serves the truth that the Jewish situation is, after all, a reflection of the general human condition. Perhaps the finest story ever written is Joyce's "The Dead." Nowhere is modern man's fatal insensitivity more beautifully rendered. I doubt that its Irish cast would have made it any less meaningful for Jews, if COMMENTARY had been around to publish it.

M. M. LIBERMAN
New York City

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Gefilte Fish, Shochtim, and Liberalism

To the Editor of Commentary:

In Toby Shafter's well-told and amusing story, "Maine Pastoral, With Duck" (February), I did not mind the author's hunting up an old anecdote about a *kashrut*-ignorant housewife who knew, however, how to "make," or render, *treife* meat kosher (so she thought). What I found a bit hard to swallow was the "supper of *gefilte fish*" served Saturday night at the home of a Jewish family with a seemingly traditional background.

Is it a New England custom—among Jews—to eat *gefilte fish* during the post-Sabbath meal as well as on Friday night and Saturday? Or did the Maine-born writer pick up that fish-lore at the Jewish Seminary in New York? . . .

Another question about life in Maine: is it customary for *kashrut*-observing women of that community to buy meat direct from the *shochet*, or rabbinically certified slaughterer? To my knowledge, it is butchers and not *shochtim* who sell meat. In the old country—and, I'm sure, in the New World as well—a *shochet* is a member of the clerical class within a Jewish community. As such, he does not go around selling ritually slaughtered meat. That's a butcher's business. And I thought that, in this respect, as goes the rest of the nation, so goes Maine. . . .

I am in complete agreement, however, with much that is contained in the February issue of Commentary—particularly the letter from Philip Hochstein in praise of Robert E. Fitch's recent essay on the cockeyed "liberal" line of so-called intellectuals regarding so-called "McCarthyism," etc.

Maurice Winograd

New York City

"Tragedy" on the West Side

To the Editor of Commentary:

I don't know whether or not this little story throws much light on the present state of "intergroup relations" in New York City, but perhaps your readers will find it of interest.

I recently traveled from the Riverdale section of the Bronx to Manhattan in one of those "limousine" taxis which carry five or six passengers to different destinations at a considerably lower cost than that of a regular taxi.

I sat in the front seat beside the driver, and there were four passengers in the back, three women and a man, all rather prosperous-looking, middle-aged Jews bound for various addresses on the middle West Side of Manhattan. One of the women talked continuously to the others about the present "situation" in New York. Neighborhoods deteriorating before one's eyes. You're not safe on the street any more. "My sister-in-law on 84th Street kept her windows closed all summer; she couldn't sleep with the noise they were making." Filth. Noise. Crime. Those Puerto Ricans live sixteen in a room, have no sense of cleanliness. It is reported that their children get born after six months instead of nine; nothing else could account for the rapidity of their increase. "Fifteen years I've lived in my apartment, and now I can't recognize the neighborhood any more. It's a tragedy, a real tragedy!" One landlord, owner of a high-class building in the Eighties near Central Park West, had committed suicide as his tenants fled from the onrushing hordes. Others have not scrupled to enjoy the profits to be gained from renting to the Puerto Ricans—"those landlords are the real criminals." And so on. Except for the theory about the shorter period of gestation among Puerto Ricans, there was nothing that one doesn't hear all the time in New York these days, though often in more apologetic terms: "I've always been a liberal, but . . . !"

This time, for some reason, I turned around and said, "Lady, how do you know I'm not a Puerto Rican?" Even as I said this, I was sorry for what I was doing, feeling suddenly that the woman in the back seat was, after all, not so dreadful a person, only saying what many others were saying, and that I was wrong to embarrass her with my challenging question. But she proved perfectly equal to the difficulty. "It doesn't matter if you are," she said. "I'm not talking about your type of Puerto Rican."

The monologue in the back seat then continued as before, though after a while, it must be admitted, there was some tendency to taper off. The lady left the taxi at West End Avenue and 88th Street.

Charles Eshkenazi

New York City

The American Indian

To the Editor of Commentary:

We Jews reproach the Germans with their passive acquiescence in such horrors as the slaughter of Europe's Jewry.

Our federal government is currently engaged in another act of an endless drama, the dispossession and moral destruction of the American Indian. (For details see the Association on American Indian Affairs.) The drama is not so lurid and the horror not so extreme, but the moral parallel is plain. . . .

Could Commentary interrupt its paean to America long enough to comment?

Murray Wax

Chicago, Illinois

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Retraction

To the Editor of Commentary:

In August 1952 you published my article "Culture in Tel-Aviv and Environs," in which I attempted to give a fair yet frank and unbiased picture of theatrical and musical events in Israel. Frank criticism is not considered fair by chauvinistic elements in any society in any country. . . . The privately owned Hebrew Opera, which describes itself as a national institution, conveniently making use of my article in its fight against the entire Israeli press, brought a libel suit against me, claiming damages of 30,000 Israeli pounds.

The article had deplored the depths to which opera had sunk in Israel, after a period of remarkable artistic enterprise and standard, and had denied that the present management (Mme. Edis de Philippe, Messrs. Even-Zohar and Lolinkin) were the right people to lead an opera. It had also deplored the lack of an interesting repertoire and asserted that Mme. de Philippe selected the repertoire in a way to enable her to stage or appear in each opera.

Israel's leading authorities confirmed the substance of the article, but the Opera maintained in court that the article was of an anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist nature—the State of Israel and the Opera apparently being identical in the eyes of a prima donna.

The Opera proved errors in two statements: Mme. de Philippe stemmed from a family from Odessa, but was born in America (while I had in parenthesis described her as an American singer from Odessa), and she had never telephoned the Minister of Police to ask his intervention against the music critics who wanted to enter the Habimah Building to hear an opera performance for which they had bought tickets. (I had reported such a telephone call following Mme. de Philippe's own statement, confirmed by witnesses, as it was published by all Israeli morning papers at the time—without official denial.)

The Tel-Aviv District Court brought about an agreement under which the plaintiffs were granted a third of their costs at court, and it was demanded of the undersigned that he publish in Israeli papers and in Commentary the following declaration:

Mme. de Philippe was born in New York. That I wrote that she was an American singer from Odessa was a regrettable mistake. I did not mean to imply that she had given wrong information regarding her birthplace.

2. Mme. Edis de Philippe did not initiate the mutilated version of the opera *La Traviata* performed by the Palestine Folk Opera in 1946. One of the main reasons for the form of the opera was the time limit set for production.

3. The real reasons for the liquidation of the Folk Opera have not been clearly explained.

4. *The Barber of Seville* was not produced by Mme. de Philippe and she did not appear in this opera. I was therefore mistaken in writing that she either produced or appeared in all opera performances. I cannot maintain that the Opera prevented soloists not now employed from appearing.

I learned that on the occasion when newspaper critics were not allowed to attend a performance, Mme. de Philippe did not telephone the Minister of Police to ask for his intervention. In writing this I was relying on information received and on notices in the press..

6. I regret that the article may have created the impression that a law suit that was to have been lodged in connection with Mr. M. Ravina's not being admitted to the theater was quashed through Mme. de Philippe's intervention (or that of other members of the Opera) with the Minister of Police or other persons.

7. In regard to the findings of the Music Council of the Ministry of Education and Culture, I wrote that the subsidy had been discontinued. It had, in fact, been discontinued for a short period; when I wrote the article I did not realize that it had been renewed.

I cannot maintain that Mr. Even-Zohar was in touch with government institutions.

8. In referring to "special information" about the Opera's finances, received by the Music Council, I relied on information obtained at its meetings, without examining the Opera's accounts. I did not intend to express an opinion about the Opera's bookkeeping.

I wish to express regret for any damage sustained by Mme. de Philippe or the Opera through the inclusion of errors in the article.

Peter Gradenwitz

Tel Aviv, Israel

[We publish Dr. Gradenwitz's letter at his request, and as an accommodation to him. We hope we may without injury to Dr. Gradenwitz record our feeling that this libel suit casts interesting light on the present state of cultural freedom in Israel.—Ed.]

Acknowledgment

In printing "Neilah in Gehenna," by I. L. Peretz (January), we omitted to mention that it would appear in *The Treasury of Yiddish Fiction,* edited by Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg, to be published by Viking.—Ed.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The U. S. Army and the DP's

EISENHOWER AND THE JEWS. By JUDAH NADICH. Twayne. 263 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by JUDD L. TELLER

THIS book is serious history despite its irrelevant introduction and deceptive title—for both of which, we hope, the publisher alone was responsible. Such unabashed exploitation of the President's name is all the more reprehensible because almost wholly unjustified by the book's main subject: the evolution of American policy towards the displaced Jews in Germany and Austria in the months immediately after the war.

Rabbi Nadich lists the many Americans then engaged in creating and executing, or else aborting and circumventing, that policy. Mr. Eisenhower figures prominently throughout the book, but whatever real justification there is for the title is provided in the introductory chapter, an apparent afterthought that, in the words of the blurb, "brings the story up to date, treating of the continuing relations between Eisenhower and the Jews as they revealed themselves particularly during his campaign for the Republican nomination and for the Presidency and since his inauguration until the summer of 1953."

STATEMENTS issued in the course of an electoral campaign can be disregarded by serious students of history. Mr. Eisenhower's non-campaign statements on the Jews include a Rosh Hashanah message, and an acceptance speech on receiving an honorary degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary. These contain the expected. Why any special effort should be made to link Eisenhower—or any other eminent American—with the Jews, either by way of soliciting his views, or approval, of them, escapes me. Indeed, it is in poor taste, and Rabbi Nadich's statement that "in the annals of Jewish history the name of General Eisenhower will always be venerated as one of the great saviors in the history of the Jewish people" is more of the same. It suggests a spirit of *ma yafeet* wholly inconsistent with the dignity which belongs to American Jewry.

True, similar studies have been produced on Washington and the Jews, and on Lincoln and the Jews, but these deal with periods in our history when Jews were still few in America, new to their civic equality, and inclined to regard their citizenship as more a privilege than a right. To imply that any present American policy affecting Jews could be the work of a single individual is to give a very erroneous notion of contemporary American society. Neither Presidents nor Commanders-in-Chief have that power; and, more important, American Jews are not that helpless.

The true prime mover of American policy on the Jewish DP's was public opinion in the United States, which demanded preferential treatment for Hitler's first victims. And it was President Truman, Secretary of State Stimson, and General Marshall who responded to this demand. It was the report of Earl G. Harrison, the President's special emissary to Germany, that aroused White House indignation, which in turn exerted pressure upon Generals Eisenhower and Clark in Europe. Rabbi Nadich's own presentation of the facts distributes the credit this way, despite the title of his book and his own editorializing, which weigh the credit too much in Eisenhower's direction. Appreciably less would have been done for the displaced Jews, as is again evident from the author's own presentation, if General Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, had felt less moral indignation and acted with less administrative vigor in putting into effect his chief's interpretation of Washington's directives.

NO ONE is better qualified to tell about all this than Rabbi Nadich. An army chaplain, he was General Eisenhower's first adviser on

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Jewish affairs, and his contribution to the implementation of American policy was a very significant one, although he himself modestly understates it. Prior to this book, we knew the story only in fragmentary, sensational fashion, and with little accuracy, as related by amateur journalist-social workers who rushed books into print ascribing to themselves wholly fictitious roles in the rescue of the surviving Jews of Europe.

Other parts of the story have been told by members of the intergovernmental committees who, immediately upon completing their official reports on the condition of the Jewish DP's, entrusted their private diaries to the care of facile literary ghosts. Rabbi Nadich's account, it is evident, has not received the same doubtful benefits. He tells his story sincerely, and well, and completely. He shows how the commanders in the field cooperated with Washington, and how they refused to cooperate; how they resented the goading from Washington, and how they failed to understand the principles behind the policy which gave preferential treatment to the Jewish DP; and how they were reluctant to assume the additional responsibilities and to follow the procedures, alien to army tradition, which were made necessary by these responsibilities.

Even General Eisenhower was reluctant, for sound reasons, to accept the recommendations that he appoint an adviser on Jewish affairs, separate Jewish from other DP's, and gather them together in all-Jewish camps. Nothing in his previous experience as an American had prepared him to understand a policy which seemed to discriminate against the Jew rather than favor him. These recommendations were based, however, on the grim realities of past experience in Eastern Europe, where the Jew had too often been treated, not as a fellow citizen, but as an enemy alien. Never had this been truer than under Nazi occupation, when many of his fellow citizens in Poland, the Baltic states, Hungary, and elsewhere collaborated in his extermination. In 1945 some of these latter had gone underground in the DP camps in order to escape retribution, and had they been allowed to mingle with the Jewish survivors they would have succeeded in this effort all the more easily.

Nor was the demand that a Jewish adviser be attached to General Eisenhower altogether unprecedented. Napoleon had convened a spurious Sanhedrin to ratify his proposals for reforming Jewry. The Czars, for similar reasons, had likewise appointed committees on Jewish affairs—but often made up of more Gentiles than Jews. It was ironic that American Jewry should have had to ask their government to re-create, for the nonce, this unhappy Old World institution. But in this case the term "adviser on Jewish affairs" came to acquire unprecedented dignity and to be associated with great humanitarian ends.

And the issue of preferential treatment for the Jews had also been raised before—from time to time in the French Revolutionary Assembly, in the crucial years between 1789 and 1791. Even the most liberal Frenchmen had not been able to reconcile the Jewish demand for equality with the simultaneous request that the Assembly reaffirm the autonomy of the Jewish *kehillot,* which were a product of the old ghetto regime. What the French Jews in the 18th century were concerned with, however, was the preservation of their collective identity, just as the Jewish DP's of our day were primarily concerned with physical survival. Unless they were separated from non-Jewish DP's, given extra rations, and treated by Jewish doctors, not by Nazi ones pressed into service for the emergency, they could not hope to return truly from the dead.

Rabbi Nadich reveals for the first time the whole shocking story of the late General Patton's willful circumvention and distortion of General Eisenhower's directives on the treatment of Jewish DP's. Not since Grant's notorious order early in the Civil War, expelling Jewish traders from the areas under his command, had an American officer been guilty of such patent anti-Semitism. Grant was to apologize for the rest of his life for an order whose inspiration has never been properly explained. Patton continued to sabotage General Eisenhower's directives until transferred to another command; and many of his aides followed his lead.

This book refutes, quite inadvertently, a number of anti-Semitic slanders. The lunatic fringe in this country has been alleging the predominantly "Jewish" composition and "leftist" political coloration of UNRRA. Rabbi Nadich, without making a blanket indictment, reveals some shocking anti-Semitic conduct by field representatives of UNRRA. From his account, we also learn that Jewish DP's had asked

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to be allowed to go to Palestine before they ever saw any of the emissaries of the Palestinian Zionists, and that if the Palestine Jewish Brigade and the Jewish Agency people had not taken the initiative in starting educational projects, DP morale would have faced the American military with grave problems, embarrassed Jewry everywhere, and prolonged the agony of the DP's themselves.

One would have liked more details about the people, high and low, with whom Rabbi Nadich came in contact in the course of his assignment. One is curious also about the identity of the American general who, when Soviet border guards were turning back Jews trying to escape from Eastern Europe via Austria, "casually pointed to the large map on the wall of his office and indicated several other safe crossings of the border where he knew no Russian guards were stationed." This reviewer's guess is that he was Brigadier-General Home, since deceased, "a mild-mannered and soft-spoken gentleman . . . [who] spoke at length about Moses as a military leader." One would also have liked fuller portraits of such men as Sergeant Gottfried Neuberger, who managed to secure for the DP's in his area not only clothes and more calories, but kosher food; and Rabbi Abraham J. Klausner, who became, with Rabbi Nadich's laudable "connivance," a true DP chaplain, unattached to any unit and operating wholly among Jewish DP's. (Sergeant Neuberger recounted some of his wartime experiences in an article in COMMENTARY, March 1949.)

Rabbi Nadich also treats us to some lighter stories. The Palestine Jewish Brigade, he tells us, chalked on its jeeps an ingenious paraphrase of a Nazi slogan by adding a "k" to the German word *ein—"Kein Volk, Kein Reich, Kein Fuehrer. Achtung, die Juden kommen!"* Incidentally, he reports on talks he had with Ben Gurion during the latter's visit to the German DP camps: the future Prime Minister of Israel, we learn, was even then unhappy about American Zionist leadership.

This book belongs, importantly, in the scant library of American Jewish history. Formerly the United States had acted as only a diplomatic intercessor on behalf of persecuted Jewries. In 1945, however, our government, and our military, had for the first time to deal directly with persecuted Jewries. It was a perilous moment for all concerned, but America proved triumphantly the sincerity of her humanitarian faith.

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Metaphysical Rebellion

THE REBEL. By ALBERT CAMUS. Translated from the French by Anthony Bower. Knopf. 273 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by H. STUART HUGHES

THE publication a year and a half ago of Albert Camus' *L'Homme Révolté* was bound to cause a sensation in French literary circles. The author of *The Stranger* and *The Plague* had already achieved a position of unquestioned preeminence as a novelist. He was distinguished among French intellectuals by the firmness of his anti-Communist convictions, his moral elevation, and his refusal to rest content with the prevailing philosophic mood of despair. Already estranged from Sartre, Camus marked with his new book his final break from the former's curious blend of Existentialism and Marxism. For *L'Homme Révolté* was both a philosophic and a political tract. On the level of ethics it represented an effort to formulate more precisely the doctrine of Stoic protest against mass suffering that had formed the central theme of *The Plague*. As a political polemic, Camus' book dealt with terror—and in so doing offered a telling answer to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Humanisme et Terreur,* a collection of essays by one of Sartre's closest associates, whose sinuous, sophisticated argumentation had given French neutralists their most nearly tenable standing-ground.

IT IS in this local context that the translated work must initially be approached. The English or American reader may be rather bewildered by *The Rebel* if he fails to understand that what he has before him is an intensely Parisian book written for an audience that in the immediate postwar years was the most lively and interesting in the world, but that recently has been showing signs of a growing provincialism. It is an attempt to convince French intellectuals of something that in Britain or the United States no longer requires proof—that the great revolution of our time has been perverted to ends that are nearly the opposite of those its progenitors had in view. In English-speaking countries, with their tradition of philosophical empiricism and common-sense argument, the citation of the bare facts of Soviet terror and oppression is usually sufficient: in France a more elaborate exposition is required; the Existentialists must be answered on their own philosophic grounds and in their own vocabulary.

Thus Camus begins his argument in typically Gallic fashion with a Cartesian formula. The experience of personal rebellion against the human condition offers the "first clue." "Rebellion is the common ground on which every man bases his first values. I *rebel*—therefore we *exist*." From Rousseau through the regicides of the French Revolution to Marx and Lenin, the author outlines the thought of the great rebels who sought to extend to all humanity their personal vision of a new universe. This is the classic highway of ideological exposition; of recent years it has been repeatedly traced by a series of such extremely competent guides as Karl Popper, Edmund Wilson, and Isaiah Berlin; here Camus has little that is new to offer the critical reader. It is rather in his parallel account of the "metaphysical" rebels that he introduces his own abstract twist.

Among the latter he numbers the Marquis de Sade—whose fantasies of torture in closely guarded fortresses offered a microcosm of the future world of the concentration camp—the Romantic poets, Nietzsche ("absolute affirmation"), and the French Surrealists, the discussion of whom falls among the scattered sections of the book which, without explanation, have been omitted from the translation. In the Russian terrorists of the late 19th century the two currents fuse—in particular in Netchayev, "the cruel high priest of a desperate revolution." And from there it is only a step to "state terrorism"—the "irrational terror" of fascism, "a primitive impulse whose ravages have been greater than its real ambitions," and the still more fearful "rational terror" of Communism, under which "slavery . . . becomes the general condition and the gates of Heaven remain locked."

By this double route, then, Camus arrives at a fairly orthodox conclusion. "We are at the moment in history," he affirms, "when rebellion has reached the point of its most extreme contradiction by denying itself." Hence "it must either perish with the world it has created or find a new object of faith and a new impetus." This is the moment of resolution of the author's historical-metaphysical dilemma. But the result is anticlimax: the "new impetus" turns out to be something very old. It is moderation—dear to the French spirit—the "irrepressible demand of human nature of which the Mediterranean, where intelligence is intimately related to the

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blinding light of the sun, guards the secret." "Moderation," Camus hastens to add, "is not the opposite of rebellion. Rebellion in itself is moderation, and it demands, defends, and re-creates it throughout history and its eternal disturbances." Only thus can nihilism be dethroned—when "a new rebellion is consecrated in the name of moderation and of life."

OBVIOUSLY a résumé as bald as the foregoing does injustice to Camus' closely reasoned and frequently subtle argument. In this lies the central difficulty of dealing with such a book, which might well drive a reviewer to despair. To attempt to summarize its contents is to present a travesty: its finer points slip through one's fingers and run away into mere banalities. Yet surely a work of this sort should be susceptible of succinct characterization. Must one dismiss it, then, as just one more effort to explain a revolution betrayed? But this is what Camus specifically denies that he is trying to do: "the purpose of this analysis," he states, "is not to give, for the hundredth time, a description of the revolutionary phenomenon, nor once more to examine the historic or economic causes of great revolutions. Its purpose is to discover in certain revolutionary data the logical sequence, the explanations and the invariable themes of metaphysical rebellion."

Here, I think, is the real question. The novelty of Camus' book, as already noted, lies in his addition of the "metaphysical rebellion" to the more familiar "historical rebellion." But is there a real justification for this? Is it something more than a literary device? Have the Marquis de Sade and his spiritual descendants a verifiable connection—whether historical or merely intellectual—with the world revolution of the 20th century? Or has the second argument—of great intrinsic interest it is true—simply been grafted on to the more usual one to which it bears *no organic relation*? These are harsh questions; to raise them at all may be simply to reveal one's own intellectual obtuseness. Yet an irreverent Anglo-Saxon cannot help suspecting that in this case Camus has succumbed to the supreme temptation of the intellectual historian to wrap up all his data in one neat package.

THE explanation would seem to be the one suggested at the beginning of this review: for intellectuals of a rather specialized sort, a specialized literary argument is required. And along with it go the abstract, lapidary formulations of Existentialist discourse. In taking a political stand that in France is intellectually unpopular—however orthodox it may be on this side of the water—Camus has apparently felt under a compulsion to vindicate his own position as a practicing intellectual. And at the same time he must prove his unshaken loyalty to the tradition of personal revolt. Hence the second great difficulty of his book—the unexpected twist at the end where revolt and moderation are made to coincide. A conclusion in favor of moderation would be unexceptionable: a weary world could ask nothing better. But stated without qualification it would appear commonplace and, still worse, conservative. In an intellectual community in which some brand of leftism is *de rigueur*, Camus can save his standing and self-respect only by the extraordinary gymnastic feat of equating the age-old tradition of Gallic common sense with the new imperative of rebellion.

To the wider audience of the English-speaking world, then, *The Rebel* comes as something of a great irrelevancy. I reach this conclusion with diffidence and in sorrow. It seems terribly unjust to a book that is noble in concept and

THE MEANING OF KADDISH

by ELI SIEGEL

Many people have found encouragement and hope in this logical, beautiful explanation of the profound Hebrew chant. The essay is in keeping with the principles of Aesthetic Realism, and shows that the meaning of Kaddish, understood rightly, has a deep ethical significance for all of us, not only in time of grief, but in our everyday lives. The Society for Aesthetic Realism feels that more people should know this explanation.

Eli Siegel's free verse translation of the Kaddish, which is embodied in the essay, first appeared in *Commentary*.

Copies of *The Meaning of Kaddish* are available from Amory Books, 280 West 12th St., N.Y.C., at ten cents each.

This announcement appears in memory of Bernard Nussbaum, as an expression of Charlotte Nussbaum and Family of Forest Hills, N. Y.

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praiseworthy from every ethical or political point of view. It does far less than justice to the literary elevation of certain passages—notably the concluding pages—which the translator (with one or two very minor slips) has rendered with faithfulness and clarity. Yet such are the perils of an attempt to write a great book rather than merely a good one. I, for one, regret that an author for whom I feel the most profound respect should have undertaken to rationalize the ethical stand that he had already formulated in classic fashion in *The Plague*. As a novel, *The Plague* left the new moral precept on the level of metaphor. And that was where it belonged: the attempt to explain it more precisely has simply weakened it. From those of us for whom *The Plague* ranks as the greatest of postwar novels—the supreme parable of our time—nothing more can be expected than a respectful salute to a successor that for all its nobility remains a failure.

Does Zangwill Still Live?

THE KING OF SCHNORRERS. By ISRAEL ZANGWILL. Shoe String Press. 156 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by MILTON HINDUS

THE hero of this picaresque tale dealing with the English Jewry of the late 18th century (now reprinted from the English edition of 1893) is the beggar Menasseh Bueno Barzillei Azevedo da Costa, whose name sufficiently indicates his distinguished Sephardic ancestry. He manages to live well not only by his wits, but by the truly Hidalgo pride with which he overawes his Ashkenazic victims—a choice collection of rich London stockbrokers and rabbis. He levies his tribute upon these wealthy unfortunates with the most insulting condescension; for the Schnorrer Menasseh is no less haughty than Proust's Baron de Charlus. Like all natural aristocrats, he understands that great saying of Rabelais, that the worth of a man is exactly determined by the esteem in which he holds himself.

Menasseh does not seem to ask for help so much as he commands the assistance of his subjects, and if he cannot rule over any other realm he will at least be the King of Schnorrers. In contrast, there is the plebeian capitalist of the story, Joseph Grobstock, his name indicating the coarse stock from which he is sprung. For all his money, Grobstock trembles in Menasseh's presence as if before a superior. Menasseh condescendingly explains to his Ashkenazic "benefactor" why this attitude on his part is only to be expected: "You are the immigrants of yesterday—refugees from the Ghettos of Russia and Poland and Germany. But we, as you are aware, have been established here for generations; in the Peninsula our ancestors graced the courts of kings, and controlled the purse-strings of princes; in Holland we held the empery of trade. Ours have been the poets and scholars in Israel. You cannot expect that we should recognize your rabble, which prejudices us in the eyes of England. We made the name of Jew honorable; you degrade it."

Zangwill plays many variations upon the theme of the ridiculous snobbery which asserts itself even among pariahs whose downtrodden position should perhaps have made them immune to it. To the rest of the society of that time all Jews seemed equally despicable—in the very opening lines of his story, Zangwill informs the reader that it takes place "in the days when Lord George Gordon became a Jew, and was suspected of insanity"; but among the Jews themselves there is such an infinite number of subtle social distinctions that the study of the Faubourg Saint-Germain becomes simplicity itself by comparison.

The serious observation underlying Zangwill's humor concerns the charitable instincts and the sense of mutual responsibility which are so highly developed among the Jewish people. The Jewish attitude does not regard the failure as a hopeless outcast from society who is at most the object of pity; it regards him as a reproach to the social conscience and a responsibility of it. So Zangwill describes a Jewish beggar: "The stone-blind man bore no braggart placard—his infirmity was an old established concern well-known to the public, and conferring upon the proprietor a definite status in the community. He was no anonymous atom, such as drifts blindly through Christendom, vagrant and apologetic." Properly exploited by a fertile intelligence like Menasseh's, this attitude enables the ostensible mendicant to become the actual master in the eleemosynary relationship.

I BEGAN *The King of Schnorrers* with an anticipation based on a misty recollection of an old reading of Zangwill. The letdown I experienced was commensurate with my hopes.

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Perhaps to one who is more of an "outsider," *The King of Schnorrers* may seem, as Professor Bernard N. Schilling says in his introductory essay, "an extremely funny book." I find this hard to believe, however. Not that I think it a bad book, but it seems a good deal more humorous in intention than in fact.

And yet Zangwill has some solid literary virtues which are still discernible. He knew his Jewish subjects from within. If his tone occasionally suggests that he is writing with an eye to the quaintness which appeals to tourists, it is the Jewish tourist whom he has in mind as well as the Gentile. Zangwill's Jewish knowledge is authentic, but I am afraid that it does not go too deep. It is a kind of journalistic smattering which seeks to impress the reader with a loose sprinkling of supposedly esoteric facts and colorful foreign words.

Zangwill possesses a sense of literary form which makes him scrupulous about connecting the beginning of his story with its end; he has an inventiveness of comic detail which, while not of the highest order, is distinctly above the mediocre; and best of all he cultivates a conciseness of expression which makes his style, if not classical, at least "studious of brevity." His style gives us the feeling of his being thoroughly at home in the English language; this, in spite of the greater example of Disraeli before him, was as flattering as it was surprising to the sensibilities of his fellow Jews in England in the last decade of the 19th century. What must have been doubly pleasing to them was the fact that he had used his sensitive ear for English not to make his way in the Gentile world, but had brought his gift "home" with him and used it for Jewish purposes.

His limitations as an artist appear most clearly when we compare him with Sholom Aleichem. Though the finer points of Sholom Aleichem's original Yiddish text defy the best-intentioned efforts to recapture them in any other idiom, yet even in the awkward gabardine of translation English he is distinctly funnier than Zangwill. It is perhaps a paradox that Sholom Aleichem, composing in a language which was accessible to Jews only, should have achieved a greater measure of universality than Zangwill did. I shan't attempt to say why this is so beyond remarking that Sholom Aleichem is never in doubt about his identity or his point of view, while Zangwill (in spite of an almost ostentatious feeling of ease in his English environment) betrays such doubts.

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Sometimes he is the Jew whom he is writing about, sometimes he is only one of the onlookers, and sometimes he falls between the two.

To those Jews whose native language is English, the name of Zangwill will always evoke a feeling of respect. This feeling (the experiment of the current reprint suggests) is probably based on an exaggeration of his actual merits. We tend to forget that while he brought his Jewish interests to the very border of English literary history, he never really took them across the line. The better part of his reputation lies in his attractive qualities as a person. He deserves his place in our pantheon, but it is not altogether without misgivings that we see his work being dusted off once more and offered to critical inspection.

Religion and the American State

CHURCH, STATE, AND FREEDOM. By LEO PFEFFER. Beacon Press. 675 pp. $10.00.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY: CATHOLIC SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT AND MOVEMENTS, 1789-1950. Edited by JOSEPH N. MOODY. Arts, Inc. 914 pp. $12.00.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE AMERICAN IDEA. By THEODORE MAYNARD. Appleton-Century-Crofts. 309 pp. $3.50.

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. Edited by J. RICHARD SPANN. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 272 pp. $2.75.

AMERICA'S WAY IN CHURCH, STATE, AND SOCIETY. By JOSEPH MARTIN DAWSON. Macmillan. 189 pp. $2.50.

THE GREAT TRADITION OF THE AMERICAN CHURCHES. By WINTHROP S. HUDSON. Harper. 265 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT E. FITCH

Two of the six books on church and state reviewed here, *Church and Society* and *Church, State, and Freedom,* are monumental works of scholarship. One of them, Spann's symposium, is an elaboration of Protestant social ethics in its bearings on current problems. The other three have some kind of apologetic intent. Theodore Maynard makes a plea for the acceptance of Roman Catholicism as a natural part of the "American Idea." Dawson and Hudson are chiefly concerned to develop the argument for separation of church and state.

Personally, I should select Leo Pfeffer's *Church, State, and Freedom* as the book of most solid and enduring worth, and of greatest interest to the intelligent citizen and general reader. The scope of the volume is incredible. It covers every sort of church-state relationship in American history. In Part I, Mr. Pfeffer gives us the evolution of a principle. In Part II he discusses state aid to religion, church intervention in state affairs, state intervention in church affairs, and the whole question of public and parochial schools. In Part III he considers the bearings of this issue on the common defense, on domestic tranquillity, and on general welfare. There is abundant citation of the important court decisions, of the testimony of witnesses, and of the relevant body of political philosophy and tradition. There is also an impartial presentation of the various arguments for and against each position taken. Just as remarkable as the amplitude of this erudite work is the richly human quality of its texture, and its readability.

Joseph Moody's symposium on *Church and Society* treats of Roman Catholic social and political thought and movements from 1789 to 1950. Its nine hundred pages have sections on the Papacy, France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Spain and Latin America, England, and the United States. It also contains reproductions of important documents, both lay and ecclesiastical. While the section on the United States is somewhat perfunctory, and the section on Spain and Latin America inadequate, those parts which deal with France and Germany appear to be exceptionally meritorious. Some readers will want to compare this writing with the work of a distinguished Protestant scholar that covers much of the same ground—James Hastings Nichols' *Democracy and the Churches.* All readers will be grateful for the thorough character of this study and for the persistently liberal intent of the authors. The reference value of the book is tremendous.

Theodore Maynard is trying to persuade us that Roman Catholicism, far from being antagonistic to the American idea, "is really the most powerful support that it can find in the modern world." This claim will strike many persons as

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extraordinary, and it must have appeared so finally to Maynard, because I see no evidence in the book that he has even begun to substantiate it. However, he does give an interesting account of the Roman Catholic community in the United States, with particular regard for the various ethnic and national ingredients in it, and with attention to activities in evangelism, education, culture, politics, and labor. Mr. Maynard's presentation is marked by lucidity and wit. He is temperate in his treatment of the Protestant persecution of Roman Catholics in this country, and discriminating in his specific claims for Roman Catholic achievements.

The last two books cited are a reminder that there is a powerful liberal movement in Roman Catholicism that is determined to reconcile its religious values with political democracy. This is noticeable in Maynard's writing, in spite of his dismissal of "theological Americanism." It shows up, for instance, in Moody's symposium when the citation from *Mirari Vos* against the "senseless and erroneous idea" of freedom of conscience is preceded by the label, "The Voice of the Past." It appears in the same volume in the explicit repudiation of the idea that Roman Catholic espousal of religious toleration in this country is merely a temporary expedient until the "population-triumph of Catholics." It is evident in the frankness, to the point of severity, with which historic betrayals of liberal values by Roman Catholics are treated by these writers. One finds an expression of the same temper in an article by the Reverend John Tracy Ellis in *Harper's* for November 1953, where, in defending the doctrine of separation, he blandly brushes aside those "pontifical statements which, in abstract and universal terms, call for a union of Church and State."

At the same time there is no mistaking the fact that even the liberal Roman Catholic has a considerably more flexible view of the meaning of separation of church and state than do some other people. There is only a suggestion of this in Maynard's assertion that his Church does not want "union" but does want "concord." How much is involved in this "concord"? In the *Harper's* article cited above the author tells of Bishop Hughes' battle for state funds to help parochial schools, and then goes on to give a quotation from the Bishop expressing his unalterable opposition to the "obnoxious union of Church and State." There seems to be no awareness in the author that, to many persons, the theory and the practice of his Bishop are in contradiction. Moreover, one must ask of the liberal Roman Catholic just what he means by religious toleration. Will it allow a minority full freedom of public worship, freedom to build churches and synagogues and schools, to establish a religious press, to engage in missionary evangelism? Or does it mean a religious freedom that is pretty well confined to the conscience, but cannot get very far outside of it? If it should be the latter—as it is in some countries—then such religious freedom is altogether too private an affair to satisfy a free society.

Of course, the institutional separation of church and state was never meant to preclude the interpenetration of persons and of principles. Spann's symposium on *The Church and Social Responsibility* reflects the larger interest. Attention is focused here on the community, on the economic order, and on the political order. While the book has Methodist sponsorship and editorial design, the fifteen contributing authors come from various denominational backgrounds. Together they may be said to represent fairly well the character of contemporary liberal Protestantism in its concern for social problems.

Messrs. Dawson and Hudson are concerned more specifically to elaborate the argument for the separation of church and state. Mr. Dawson is a member of the Religious Liberty Department of the National Council of Churches, and directs his writing to the popular reader in a hortatory mood with a sense of the urgency of immediate issues. Mr. Hudson's approach in *The Great Tradition of the American Churches*

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is that of the historian with a bias for biography. Both men speak with strength from the best Baptist tradition, and both of them refuse to succumb to the current hysteria against "secularism" as the chief foe of religion.

These two books are a reminder that there are amazing ambiguities today in the use of the term "secularism." The historic fact is that Protestantism, with reference to Roman Catholicism, is secularism in religion. It is secular in stripping down the authority of the hierarchy and in diminishing the sacramental functions of the church. It is secular in its doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and in its teaching of the sacredness of the secular calling. Roman Catholic writers, indeed, tend to equate the rise of "secularism" with the rise of Protestantism. Dawson and Hudson understand their ground here, but it is astonishing to note the number of distinguished Protestant divines and theologians who affect to make common cause with Roman Catholics in attacking an identical "secularism."

At any rate, in the American brawl over church and state there already begins to emerge one major casualty—the public school. Doubtless it is for this reason that Pfeffer devotes a substantial part of his study to the problem. Taxpayers' leagues attack the public school for reasons of economy. Reactionaries attack it because they don't believe in public education. Traditionalists attack it because of the curriculum. And religious folk of both orthodox and liberal persuasion attack it for being godless. This sort of activity, I suggest, is especially reprehensible on the part of Protestants, since they like to boast that the public school is the offspring of their own religious heritage. There is less excuse, therefore, for them to take part in the nagging and needling and knifing of the public school which has recently become one of our principal national forms of recreation. Such Protestants would do well to reflect on Hudson's sharply documented thesis that, when "secularism" begins to triumph over religion, it is because of the "secularism" within the church, not the "secularism" outside of it. For that matter I see no reason why the same thesis might not be elaborated in principle for the devotees of all faiths.

If there is anything hopeful in the six books that lie before us, it is that, with all their differences in emphasis and in degree, there seems to be a common realization that separation of church and state is for the best health of both the church and the state. After all, it is within a system of free competition for religion as for other institutions that Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism all enjoy such extraordinary vitality in the United States.

Don Quixote of Moscow

IN THE WORKSHOP OF THE REVOLUTION. By I. N. STEINBERG. Rinehart. 306 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by SOLOMON F. BLOOM

WOULD anyone dare to suggest that our age is —of all things—an age of romance? How can the spirit of the romantic and the visionary breathe in the atmosphere of realism, tension, and foreboding? The experience of the past might reassure us, for what fantastic and utopian dreams—the so-called utopian socialist systems themselves—did not burgeon in the blood-spattered fields of the French Revolution! In any case, we have the witness of the career of Dr. Isaac N. Steinberg.

At the turn of the century, Dr. Steinberg was growing up in the rarefied air of traditional Judaism. When he journeyed from Moscow to Heidelberg to take a degree in law, his Talmudic tutor accompanied him; no secular interest must be allowed to interfere with the daily pursuit of the wisdom of the Torah. His thesis, on a subject of Jewish law, reflected the dualism of his training.

Returned home, and a practicing attorney, Dr. Steinberg was caught up in the storm that was brewing behind the still imposing façade of Czarism before the First World War. If he was to become a socialist, it could not be one of the Marxist persuasion; if he was to become—as befitted a young and ardent idealist—a revolutionary, the violence of overthrow and the terror of revolution must be measured in the scales of spiritual travail. Dr. Steinberg found his place naturally on the left wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries. They were the party of the terrorists and of the saints (we need no quotation marks, they were true saints): the Spiridonovas, Kalayevs, Sazonovs, who tempered assassination with suicide, activism with self-abasement, and violence with love. (Gregory Gershuni told the military judges who condemned him to death: "We hate you not because you shed our blood, but because you force us to shed yours.")

The next stage of Dr. Steinberg's spiritual

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odyssey was that of trial and purgation "in the Workshop of the Revolution." The flaming idealists made a pact with the icy materialists. At the end of 1917, as a junior leader of the Left S.R.'s, now an independent party, Dr. Steinberg became People's Commissar for Justice in the only, and shortlived, coalition government of the Bolsheviks. The Orthodox Jew and revolutionary sat at the desk at which the legal darknesses of Czarism had formulated the decrees of anti-Semitism and illiberalism. He broke no unkosher "bread" with his comrades. He kept the Sabbath holy. In the dreadful winter of 1917-18, the line between permissible ethical violence and sinful systematic terror became difficult to draw. It seemed to recede into mysticism. Dr. Steinberg's justice was Lenin's extermination. The idealists resigned, and saved their souls in the nick of time.

An exile in Germany from totalitarian Communism, an exile in England from totalitarian Nazism, where was Dr. Steinberg to turn, apart from émigré politics? He was still a revolutionist, still a socialist, and still a practicing Orthodox Jew. Was it that in the Western world the blend of the three was rarer, and especially rare in Germany? Had he settled to begin with in England, or, as he eventually did, in the United States, would the religious populist have found a more congenial atmosphere? Religion and radical politics are in those countries no strangers to each other; witness the careers—alas, not altogether triumphant—of George Lansbury of the Labor party and William Jennings Bryan of the Democratic party. The rise of anti-Semitism, and particularly of Hitlerism, naturally accented Dr. Steinberg's Jewish interests. His religious studies made him at home in Hebrew; his populist tendencies made him favorable to Yiddish. Zionism was too nationalistic; was Labor Zionism too Marxist? The fact is that he assumed the leadership of the territorialist movement, and became the successor of Israel Zangwill and Ben Adir. He spent several years in Australia laboring to prepare the ground for a socialist and cultural settlement. He was hardly back when the government put an end to the project by discountenancing collective migration for autonomous communities. This had been all along the explicit policy of Anglo-Saxon colonial countries. And then the trial and triumph of Zionism monopolized Jewish attention and drained the support of rival and alternative plans. No territorialist proposal has materialized although the searchers have worn the map to tatters. But Dr. Steinberg, and a small but pious following, are still holding high the flag.

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How much would not a searching spiritual autobiography of such an experience enlighten some of the cross-currents of our time! Does Dr. Steinberg belong to those unself-conscious men who cannot reveal themselves? *In the Workshop of the Revolution* deals with the triumph of the Bolsheviks and the fall of their colleagues and rivals. The bulk of the book is a condensed version of a fuller and more factual account published in Yiddish and German in the 20's. We still get valuable glimpses of Lenin and most of the older Bolshevik leaders, of Djerjinsky, of the inner tensions of the cabinet, and particularly of the efforts of Dr. Steinberg and his comrades to arrest the growing system of terror. Some of the value of the eyewitness' report has been lost in compression and in the intrusion of hindsight. For example, the account of the dismissal of the Constituent Assembly is more critical of the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, and more sympathetic to the coalition government, in the present than in the older vision. In compensation Dr. Steinberg has written a few topical essays on totalitarianism and Marxism.

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We have still to get an adequate explanation of how sensitive ethical revolutionists came to trust the Bolsheviks, if only for a short time. We still seek for the rationale of the synthesis of religion, utopian socialism, and revolution that Dr. Steinberg has striven to embody. In a study of types of revolutionists, he rejects the revolutionists from "compassion," "science," and aesthetic feeling; he accepts only the revolutionist from "love." But "love" turns out to be an exalted and fine-spun, and also somber and narrow, ethical puritanism.

"Now perhaps the mysterious saying of the Talmud might be better understood: 'He who walketh on the road and studies the Law and interrupts his learning and sayeth how beautiful is this tree, how beautiful is this field, is as if he had forfeited his life.'

"How often did men, confronted with this saying, attempt to draw the conclusion that aesthetic values are alien to the Jewish spirit. But it was not against art and beauty that the Talmud warned; but rather against a mingling of the Law with the enjoyment of nature. Study, particularly when one is on the 'road' to a great goal, demands such moral concentration on the part of the traveller that he may not dissipate it on the enjoyment of life—not even for a short, passing moment. There are no clear frontiers in nature, no wide gulfs between good and evil. Nature is sublime and neutral, whereas the Law is a refining furnace in which the good is ever separated from evil. Man must therefore always be on guard, lest, God forbid, he loses his footing, mistaking the right for the wrong. Once man treads on the hard road of revolution, he dare not confound the ethical law with aesthetic feeling, lest the ethical is cast aside. And if that happens, he forfeits life itself, endangering the future of that moment of human liberation so rare in history."

Do we not have here too sharp a distinction between art and action, art and ethics? Is the message of the Psalmist reduced by his music, or enhanced? Was Milton a greater ethical force when he translated Cromwell's messages into good Latin for transmission to foreign courts, than when he translated his inner vision into *Paradise Lost*? Was Lunacharsky so wrong when he protested, during the fighting of the November Revolution, against the destruction of priceless church architecture? "His sensitive artistic soul," remarks Dr. Steinberg sharply, "could not bear such sacrilege even while the fratricidal war was in progress." Why should it? What good does it do a revolution, or any political enterprise, to destroy without discrimination? Were Lenin and Steinberg so superior when they laughed at Lunacharsky? After all, they, as much as he, had sanctioned the fratricidal war, but only he was concerned to save the artistic heritage.

Does Dr. Steinberg mean that action is closer to the good than is the beautiful? Is that what Judaism means? May it not be that Dr. Steinberg's notion of Judaism, like Lenin's notion of Marxism, is an unfortunate deviation from the best reading of the tradition?

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Judd L. Teller is a close student of Zionism and Jewish history and communal affairs. His two-part article on the personalities and beliefs of the "founding fathers" of Labor Zionism ran in our January and February issues.

H. Stuart Hughes, a member of the department of history at Leland Stanford University, is the author of *Oswald Spengler: A Critical Estimate,* published in 1952.

Milton Hindus's book *The Proustian Vision* has just been published by Columbia University Press. Mr. Hindus is an associate professor of English at Brandeis University.

Robert E. Fitch is dean of the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, and professor of Christian ethics. His article "The Illusions of the Intelligentsia" appeared in our December 1953 issue.

Solomon F. Bloom, professor of history at Brooklyn College, is now at work on an interpretative history of Europe and the United States in the past two centuries.

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This *I Believe*

RUTH BENEDICT*

"• • • NO MAN ever looks at the world with pristine eyes. He sees it edited by a definite set of customs and institutions and ways of thinking. Even in his philosophical probings he cannot go behind these stereotypes; his very concepts of the true and the false will still have reference to his particular traditional customs. John Dewey has said in all seriousness that the part played by custom in shaping the behaviour of the individual as over against any way in which he can affect traditional custom, is as the proportion of the total vocabulary of his mother tongue over against those words of his own baby talk that are taken up into the vernacular of his family.... The life history of the individual is first and foremost an accommodation to the patterns and standards traditionally handed down in his community. From the moment of his birth the customs into which he is born shape his experience and behaviour. By the time he can talk, he is the little creature of his culture, and by the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits are his habits, its beliefs his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities. Every child that is born into his group will share them with him and no child born into one on the opposite side of the globe can ever achieve the thousandth part. There is no social problem it is more incumbent upon us to understand than this of the role of custom. Until we are intelligent as to its laws and varieties, the main complicating facts of human life must remain unintelligible."

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J. M. Kaplan, President

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